NIUGNELIYUKUT (WE ARE MAKING NEW WORDS):

A COMMUNITY PHILOSOPHY OF LANGUAGE REVITALIZATION

By

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A

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By

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Abstract

The Alutiiq language on Kodiak Island (Alaska) is severely threatened, with only 37 resident speakers. The Alutiiq communities of Kodiak are engaged in a multifaceted heritage revitalization movement, which includes cultural education, revitalization of arts, and language revitalization. The language revitalization effort includes education, materials development, documentation, and terminology development (creation of new words) as a means of making the language more viable. The Kodiak Alutiiq New Words Council began in the fall of 2007. This language revitalization strategy is new to the Alutiiq community, and little research has been done on Alaska Native or Indigenous terminology development as a form of heritage revitalization. There is a need to understand the New Words Council in terms of its role in the wider language and heritage revitalization efforts, as well as understanding the value of the council to its members.

The Kodiak New Words Council is a contemporary heritage revitalization effort that entails development of new Alutiiq terms, and is part of a broader social movement to revitalize Alutiiq language and culture. Some past research on cultural heritage revitalization movements in Indigenous communities have focused on historical inaccuracies and 'inventedness' of new cultural forms, rather than the value and meaning of these efforts to their participants. Critiques of 'invention' scholarship counter that it denies Indigenous communities' agency and authority over their own cultural forms, and overlooks ongoing efforts for justice, sovereignty and healing. This study focuses attention on the social and historical context of heritage

revitalization and its meaning to participants. Benefits of the council go beyond the formal goal of developing new words to modernize the language. Participants put great value on social benefits of the New Words Council, such as empowerment, connection to culture and identity, and healing. They further measure the success of the New Words Council in terms of participation, commitment, and continuity. Ultimately, this language revitalization effort is part of a broader effort of self-determination and community survival.

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Preface

The New Words Council, the subject of this study, was initiated as part of a National Science Foundation project in the Documenting Endangered Languages Program (Award ID: BCS-0652146) entitled *Alutiiq Living Words*. This project was administered by the Alutiiq Museum & Archaeological Repository, in Kodiak, Alaska, and led by Principal Investigator Sven Haakanson, Jr., Ph.D., and myself, co-Principal Investigator/Project Manager and researcher, April G.L. Counceller. In this project ending in the summer of 2011, semi-fluent field researchers from Kodiak communities (many of them former Alutiiq language apprentices), made recordings with fluent speakers for a language archive. Audio and video selections from this archive are featured on an interactive Alutiiq language website (http://alutiiqmuseum.org/portal). The final objective of the *Alutiiq Living Words* project was the initiation and monthly meetings of the Alutiiq New Words Council (*Nuta'at Niugnelistat* – New Word Makers).

Support for my doctoral studies came from the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) Linguistics Program's SLATE (Second Language Acquisition and Teacher Education) program, funded by the Department of Education (Grant #5336A060055). The SLATE doctoral fellowship supported my studies from the Summer of 2007 through the Fall of 2009. I am also grateful to the Andrew W. Mellon Dissertation Completion Fellowship through the UAF Graduate School, which supported the writing and completion of this dissertation beginning in the Fall of 2009, and the

Alutiiq Museum who allowed significant modifications to my work schedule to allow for my studies and research.

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Quyanaasinaq ("Big Thank You") to my advisor Patrick Marlow, Ph.D., and the rest of my graduate committee: Joan Parker Webster, Ph.D., Kerrie Ann Shannon, Ph.D., and Gordon Pullar, Ph.D., for the support and encouragement that was so greatly needed in order to complete my degree in three years. I thank my husband Jeremy who fed, supported, and encouraged me throughout my studies, and daughter Emmy who took her first graduate class with me at the age of two months, as well as my sisters, parents, and the rest of my family.

I am grateful to my colleagues at the Alutiiq Museum, who were understanding of my reduced hours and divided attentions, and extremely supportive of my research and educational endeavors. My language teachers Florence *(Kuukula)* Matfay Christiansen Pestrikoff and Nick *(Nickolai Kesiin)* Alokli, who taught me to speak Alutiiq and continue this never-ending effort to this day, have inspired and encouraged me since beginning as my teachers in 2003. My friends in the Alutiiq Language Club, both learners and Elders who I wish to acknowledge, include Peter Boskofsky, Fred Coyle, Irene Coyle, Alisha Drabek, Lory Ernest, Mary Haakanson, Paul Kahutak, Dennis Knagin, Susan Malutin, Gayla Pederson, Phyllis Peterson, Sophie Katelnikoff Shepherd, and many others. Many of them are also the members of the New Words Council, who I gratefully acknowledge in making this research project possible, for being so willing to share their experience with the world in the hopes it will help others and our own community to understand more about new words creation.

Others I wish to acknowledge for various reasons, and who have not yet been listed include: Smokey Stanton, Patrick and Zoya Saltonstall, Peggy Azuyak, Lena Amason, Walkie Charles, Theresa John, Ph.D., Kathy Sikorski, Marilee Coles-Richie, Ph.D., Sabine Siekmann, Ph.D, Jeff Leer, Ph.D., Malia Villegas, Bryan Brayboy, Ph.D., Jordan Lewis, Ph.D., Marybeth Loewen, Paul Kahutak, and Stella Krumrey.

I also respectfully acknowledge two members of the New Words Council who passed away during this research project – Nadia Mullan (Afognak/Kodiak) and George Inga, Sr. (Old Harbor). *Quyanaa.*

Chapter 1:

Introduction to the Site and Study

1.1 Introduction

The Kodiak Alutiiq (a.k.a Sugt'stun[1]) language is severely threatened, with just 37 speakers residing on the Kodiak Archipelago (commonly referred to as Kodiak Island). The contemporary Alutiiq language revitalization effort began in 2002, though language survival has been a growing community concern since the late 1980s. Alutiiq communities on Kodiak Island are engaged in a multifaceted language revitalization movement, which includes language documentation, teaching, materials development, and terminology development (creation of new words). The Kodiak Alutiiq New Words Council began in the fall of 2007, and is charged with developing new terms for the Alutiiq language as a means of making it more viable. This language revitalization strategy is new to the Alutiiq community, and little research has been done on Alaska Native or Indigenous[2] terminology development, and what it means to participants, or its social context.

In addition to being an example of language revitalization, the Kodiak New Words Council also falls under a broader social movement known as heritage

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[1] The Native people of Kodiak are most widely known as Alutiiq, although the more historically accurate Sugpiaq (meaning "real person") is also used. The language is referred to as Alutiit'stun ("like an Alutiiq"), Sugt'stun ("like a real person") or simply Alutiiq. The term Aleut (used by Russian explorers for all Southern Alaska Natives) is still used by some Elders for the people and language.

[2] In this study, I use the term Indigenous with a capital I to differentiate from the "small i" used in reference to plants and animals. I use this term interchangeably with Native (also capitalized), or the term most accepted in the general or specific areas that fall under discussion (such as First Nations in Canada, or Alutiiq on Kodiak).

revitalization. Heritage revitalization, also known as heritage work (Clifford, 2004) entails community archaeology, ethnographic research, arts revitalization, language revitalization and other actions conducted by Indigenous communities to revitalize lost or declining cultural forms. It involves strategic efforts by groups to change the terms of their common existence, improve conditions, and ensure community perpetuation – turning back historic cultural suppression (Suina, 2004). Heritage revitalization cannot be separated from its sociopolitical context, and is often closely linked to other social movements and efforts to seek social justice, sovereignty, and self-determination (Clifford, 2004; Friedman, 1992).

Some past research on cultural heritage revitalization movements in Indigenous communities has focused on historical inaccuracies and 'inventedness' of new cultural forms, rather than the value and meaning of these efforts to their participants (Dombrowsky, 2004; Keesing, 1989). While many researchers who study contemporary heritage revitalization focus on the social factors giving rise to these activities, and situate heritage revitalization such as the Alutiiq New Words Council in terms of resistance and cultural survival (Clifford, 2004; Crowell, Pullar, Steffian, & Haakanson, 2004), others take a more cynical view, deconstructing heritage revitalization as performance, invention, or a quest for social capital (Lee & Graeburn, 2003; Mason, 1996).

While it is commonly accepted that cultures (and languages) continually change, the implication of Invention scholarship is that revitalized cultures are not authentic, and the members of these communities are either misinformed,

machinating, or misrepresenting the 'true Natives' who do not participate in heritage revitalization. Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars have responded that such depictions risk psychological harm and sociopolitical repercussions for Native communities seeking reparations, legislation, or continuation of tribal social program funding. They argue that such depictions are reinforced by and further encourage uneven power relationships between academics and Native peoples (Crowell et al., 2004; Trask, 1991).

In language revitalization efforts like the New Words Council, changes to language are consciously undertaken. There is no need to expose the inventedness of new words and linguistic patterns, as participants are well aware of the innovative nature of their activity. However, critiques analogous to 'invention' scholarship – involving authenticity and legitimacy – are present in Indigenous and academic discourses about language revitalization. Critics claim that revitalized languages are never like the language that was nearly or fully lost, changing in the richness of grammatical structure and vocabulary, as well as social use (Warner, Luna, & Buter, 2007; Wong, 1999). Some contend that the mere act of revitalization changes a language by objectifying it, creating cultural performance out of a once unconscious communicative act (Whiteley, 2003). Native researchers and communities, even those who struggle internally with issues of authenticity in language revitalization, contend that whatever the revitalization effort, it is a community prerogative that should be respected by researchers (L. Smith, 1999; Walters et al., 2009; S. Wilson, 2008). This study, framed by the divisive issue of authenticity in heritage revitalization, addresses

these divisive issues, as well as the social context of the New Words Council, and it's value and meaning to participants.

1.2 This Study

This is an insider, Indigenous Action Research project, which prioritizes participation and control by study participants, is focused on enacting positive change for the Native community, and is motivated by Indigenous epistemologies and research theory (Brayboy, 2006; Herr & Anderson, 2005; Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000). Acknowledging the voice and agency of study participants throughout the research process is central to this type of research (Dyrness, 2008).

This study provides empirical evidence to dispute Invention research that overlooks the true significance of heritage revitalization movements. It will provide documentation on the significance of the New Words Council and other heritage efforts, and the characteristics that should inform project design and implementation. The research questions for this study are:

1) How does the New Words Council fit in with wider heritage efforts in the Alutiiq community;

2) In what ways does the Council work as a group towards its stated and emergent goals;

3) How can the New Words Council meet the needs of its participants and implement continual strategies for improvement and community transformation?

1.3 The Findings

The results of this research project address the research questions, but also encompass larger findings emerging from the data. I contend in this dissertation that the New Words Council and Alutiiq language revitalization effort are part of a broader effort of self-determination and community survival. Benefits of the council go beyond the formal goal of developing new words to modernize the language. Participants put great value on the social benefits of the New Words Council, such as empowerment, connection to culture and identity, and healing. They further measure the success of the New Words Council in terms of broad participation, commitment of participants, and continuity of programs. The New Words Council fits within an irreducible social and historical matrix within the Alutiiq community, and is as much an example of heritage revitalization as it is of language planning.

1.4 Overview of the Study

In Chapter 2, I outline the research context for the Kodiak New Words Council. This chapter discusses the Alutiiq language and its decline in the 20th Century, as well as past and present research on the language. It provides an overview of current revitalization efforts, of which the New Words Council is a part, and describes the reasons for forming the New Words Council. The final section of Chapter 2 is a description of a typical New Words Council meeting, from planning

through conclusion, to allow those unfamiliar with the activity an idea of what happens during a meeting.

Chapter 3 is a literature review, covering topics relevant to this study. It outlines the core concepts and issues in heritage revitalization – the type of broad social movement of which the New Words Council is an example. It critiques some studies of heritage movements, in which researchers judge the inventedness and authenticity of cultural revitalization movements. The chapter also explores the literature on Language Policy and Planning (LP&P), which like heritage revitalization, can be understood in terms of larger social forces that are not just about language (Fishman, 1991; Hinton, 2001; Paulston, 1994; Wright, 2004). Possibilities and issues in the field of endangered language revitalization – a subfield of Language Policy & Planning – are explored, with an emphasis on local, grassroots planning and self-determination (Amery, 2001; Baldauf, 2006; Edwards, 2001; Romero-Little, 2006; Sims, 2006). This chapter shows how a small, community-based language revitalization project like the New Words Council can be understood in terms of its cultural and social role within the community, based on its shared characteristics with broader heritage movements.

Chapter 4 describes Indigenous Action Research, the methodology I developed for this study. Like Action Research, Indigenous Action Research centers on participant agency, and is oriented to make positive change at the research site. However, Indigenous Action Research integrates core principles from Indigenous epistemologies, and Indigenous research methodologies. Indigenous Action Research

takes into account Indigenous concerns, knowledge systems, and realities, and operates to further community survival, sovereignty and social justice.

Chapter 5, Methodology, describes the techniques and practices of Indigenous Action Research methodology as implemented in this study. In addition to describing my research techniques and analytical methods, I explore of my own part in the research. As an Alutiiq community member, I have felt tensions and concerns over my multiple roles and responsibilities in the research context. I end this chapter with an exploration of my positionalities and expectations from a community and academic perspective.

Chapter 6 explains my analytical framework, which is informed by my methodology, but employs a sociocultural framework called Activity Theory and a supporting framework called Constructivist Grounded Theory to aid in organizing and understanding my research data. Activity Theory (AT) is "a philosophical and cross-disciplinary framework for studying different kinds of human practices as development processes, with both individual and social levels interlinked at the same time" (Kutti, 1995, p. 25; Thorne, 2004). AT conceptualizes the components of activities without breaking them down into separate categories. It emphasizes the whole, rather than the parts, and stresses history, progression, transformation and change rather than a "stuck in time" snapshot of a situation (Engeström, 1999; McMurtry, 2006). Two core premises in Activity Theory are used to organize my research findings – that of holism and transformation. I also expand thematically on the principles of AT using Constructivist Grounded Theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967)

to arrive at culturally specific measures of success and improvement for the New Words Council.

In Chapter 7, I use Activity Theory in a descriptive analysis of the New Words Council, including its broader social and historical context, and its irreducible internal dynamics and components. The internal dynamics include the participants, their goals and objectives, the means they use to accomplish their object, the division of labor, and the rules that govern their actions. I also put forth a secondary metaphor, the Bridge of Generations, to explain the roles and relationships that New Words Council participants have with each other on the council and in the context of the wider language revitalization movement.

Chapter 8 involves analysis of the transformative nature of the New Words Council, using Activity Theory as an analytical framework. In addition, I propose an expansion of AT through the use of Constructivist Grounded Theory to highlight areas of interest and concern for participants. Constructivist Grounded Theory is used in the analysis of the culturally specific definitions of success in the New Words Council, and the emergent benefits of the council.

Chapter 9 is the concluding section of the thesis. In this chapter, I place the New Words Council at the center of debates over heritage revitalization, confronting some academic critiques of language and cultural revitalization movements. I then propose a new way to contextualize and understand heritage revitalization efforts like the New Words Council in terms that Indigenous groups and the academy can support – a perspective that accepts the created-ness of certain cultural forms – like new words

– without delegitimization. As an example of heritage revitalization, the New Words Council is an inward looking but politically and globally aware effort, that institutes modern methods of connecting to a historic, 'traditional' past. It is characterized by a desire for self-determination and reclamation, resistance, and survivance (Vizenor, 1994a), in an effort to strengthen community survival. This perspective offers a level of representational authority over Indigenous heritage revitalization to Indigenous groups themselves, who have a right to contribute to the discourse on equal terms with scholarly representations (Briggs, 1996; Haakanson, 2001). In conclusion, I propose a culturally relevant version of AT analysis of the New Words Council, a metaphor of the Alutiiq *angyaq*, or open skin boat, to represent the Alutiiq language revitalization movement.

Chapter 2:

The Research Site

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides background information about the research site, the Alutiiq language, the status of Kodiak Island Alutiiq, and past research on the language by scholars and community organizations. It gives a background to the Alutiiq language program and the events and issues that led to the desire and implementation of a New Words Council. This chapter concludes with a section outlining a typical monthly New Words Council meeting, from the planning stage through completion. This gives a glimpse into the dynamics of the council for those who have not participated in a New Words Council meeting.

2.2 The Alutiiq Communities of Kodiak Island, Alaska

The Kodiak Archipelago is a large group of islands that lies 30 miles off the southwestern coast of Alaska, approximately 200 miles south of Anchorage. Spanning nearly 5,000 square miles, the archipelago is roughly the size of Connecticut. This region is the traditional homeland of the Alutiiq (a.k.a. Sugpiaq) people, who have inhabited its shores for over 7,500 years (See Fig. 2.1 below).

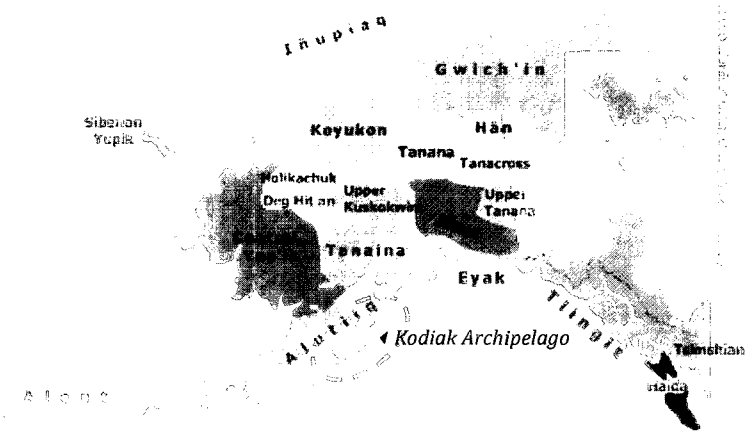

Fig. 2.1 Alaska Native Languages Map. (Modified to identify Kodiak Archipelago). Courtesy of Michael Krauss, Alaska Native Language Center (Krauss, 1982a).

Today, the Kodiak Archipelago's population of 13,000 includes roughly 1,722 Alutiiqs who are members of 10 federally recognized tribes and live in all of the islands' communities. Kodiak has 6 villages – Akhiok, Larsen Bay, Old Harbor, Ouzinkie, Port Lions, and Karluk, in addition to the regional hub town of Kodiak, all accessible only by air and water (Steffian & Counceller, 2009).

The Indigenous language of the archipelago is most commonly known as Alutiit'stun (lit. *like an Alutiiq*), Sugt'stun (lit. *like a person*), or simply Alutiiq[3]. Local speakers use the Koniag Alutiiq sub-dialect common to Kodiak Island and the Alaska Peninsula. Speakers on the Kenai Peninsula and in Prince William Sound, speak a second major dialect known as Chugach Alutiiq (http://www.uaf.edu/anlc).

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[3] For the purposes of this study, the 'Alutiiq' language refers to the Kodiak Archipelago Alutiiq subdialect, unless stated otherwise.

The size of the archipelago and the relative isolation of its communities promoted the development of two sub-dialects, as well as village-specific variations in speech. Villages characterized by the "Southern" sub-dialect include Akhiok and Old Harbor. The "Northern" sub-dialect is found in Karluk, Larsen Bay, Port Lions, Ouzinkie, and Kodiak (Counceller & Leer, 2006). Of these dialects, the Northern sub-dialect is more endangered, with a higher average speaker age, and fewer speakers. However, with the dwindling number of all speakers, there are only a handful of fluent people remaining in any Kodiak village (Hegna, 2004). The village of Karluk has no remaining speakers. The village with the largest number of speakers is Old Harbor, which has 13 resident speakers as of the Summer of 2009. For more information on Kodiak speaker statistics, see Section 2.3. See Fig. 2.2, below for community locations on Kodiak Island, and estimated speaker numbers compared to total community population.

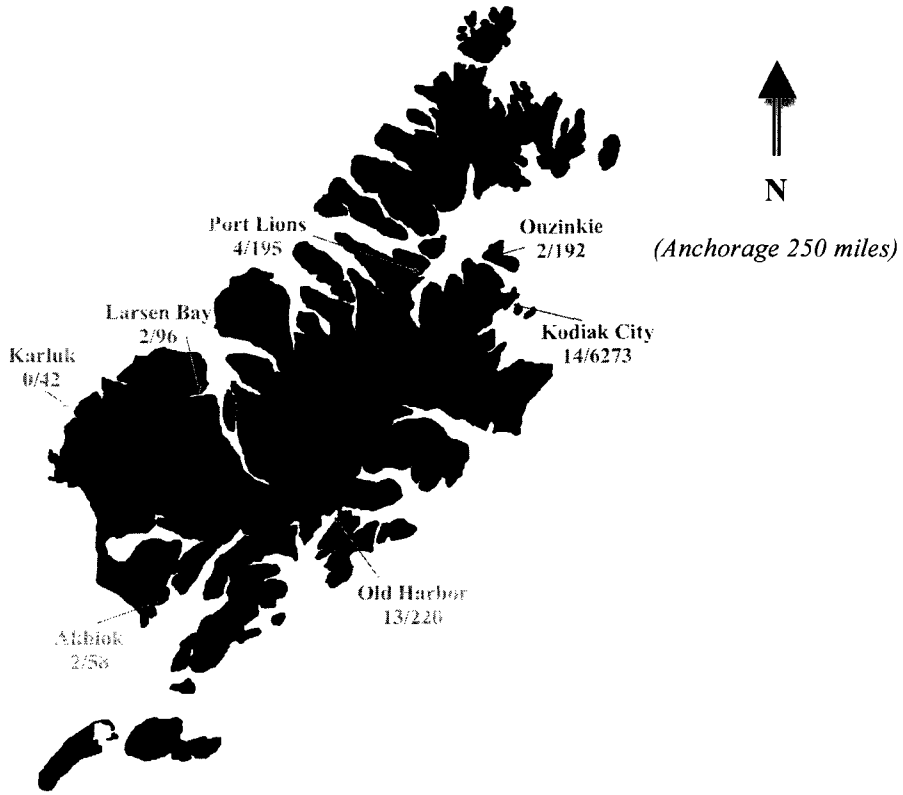

Fig. 2.2 Kodiak Archipelago communities and estimated Alutiiq speaker numbers vs. total population.

2.2.1 The Alutiiq Language

The Alutiiq people of Kodiak Island have also been called Aleut, Koniag, and Sugpiaq. While some academics have referred to the Alutiiq people as Pacific Eskimo (as well as Pacific Yupik), the term Eskimo is considered derogatory on Kodiak (Pullar, 1994). The Alutiiq region stretches from Prince William Sound west across Kodiak Island and the tip of the Kenai Peninsula, where it meets the Central Yup'ik and Unangan (Aleut) regions on the Alaska Peninsula (Steffian & Counceller, 2009). Central Yup'ik is the closest neighbor to Alutiiq geographically as well as

linguistically. Alutiiq is part of the Yupik branch of the Eskimo-Aleut language family (Leer, 2008).

There is significant mutual intelligibility between Alutiiq and Central Yup'ik – speakers of both language areas report a significant amount of mutual intelligibility. Speakers of both languages report being able to understand the basics of each others' speech. However, some shared terms can result in misunderstandings, due to differences in word meaning (Counceller & Leer, 2006; Steffian & Counceller, 2009). For example, the verb 'qanerluni' to a Central Yup'ik speaker may mean "to speak, to utter," but to an Alutiiq speaker, it means "to curse" (Jacobsen, 1984; Leer, 1978). The more distantly related Alutiiq and Unangan languages are mutually unintelligible (Counceller & Leer, 2006). See the relationship between Alutiiq and other Eskimo-Aleut languages in Fig 2.3, below.

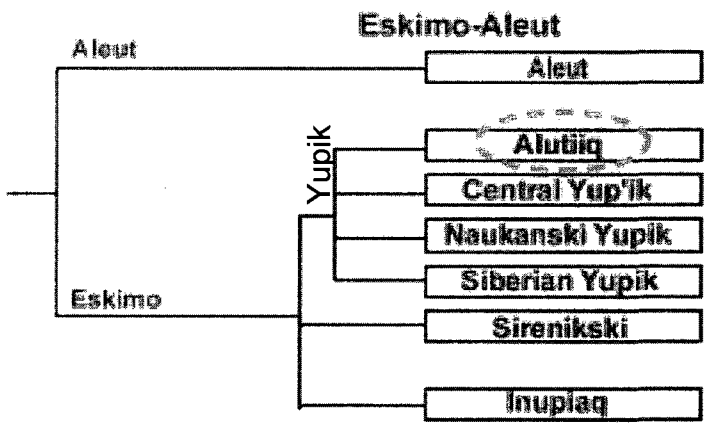

Fig. 2.3 Eskimo-Aleut Language Family Tree. (Modified to identify Alutiiq). Courtesy of Alaska Native Language Center (Holton, 2010).

2.2.2 The Alutiiq Language on Kodiak

The history of the naming of Kodiak's Native people is complex. It is said that the original name for an Alutiiq person was *Sugpiaq* – "Real Person", which has the same meaning as the self-designators *Yup'ik* and *Inupiaq*, in their respective languages[4]. Before contact with European traders and settlers, however, there was no fixed regional identity as one nation – people usually identified by their home village or by a cluster of villages led by a head chief (Pullar, 1992). Those on Kodiak Island could refer to themselves by village (i.e. *Uyaqsarmiut* – "People of Uyaqsaq," now Larsen Bay) or by geographic area (*Qik'rtarmiut* – "People of the Island")[5]. Russian settlers referred to the Alutiiq people as Aleuts (pronounced "Aleuty" in Russian) using a Siberian Native term meaning *coastal dweller* for all Alaska Natives they encountered (Leer, 2001; Steffian & Counceller, 2009).

After two centuries of being called Aleut, people began using the word Alutiiq (using the local language pronunciation of "Aleuty") in the 1970s, to differentiate the Eskimoan-speaking Alutiiqs from the Unangan-speaking Aleuts of the Aleutian chain (Leer, 1978; Steffian & Counceller, 2009). Alutiiq was not a new term, however, having been documented in the early 1800s (Holmberg, 1985). Many Kodiak Elders still retain use of the term Aleut due to its long history (Pullar, 1994). Aleut also

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[4] The root word *suk* means "person," just as does *yuk* in the Central Yup'ik region and *inuk* in the Inupiaq region. The suffix *–piaq*, meaning "real [noun]" is shared with related languages such as Central Yup'ik and Inupiaq, as can be seen with the group designator *Inupiaq*.

[5] The suffixes *–miut* and *-miu'at* on Kodiak Island mean "people of [location]." The *-miut* suffix is also used in the Central Yup'ik and Inupiaq regions.

remains a self-designator for some Unangan people and other residents of the Alaksa Peninsula, regardless of their linguistic or ethnic affiliation.

In the past decade, some communities in the region such as Nanwalek, on the Kenai Peninsula, have begun using Sugpiaq as a self-designator. This has had a mixed response on Kodiak. While some believe that the term Sugpiaq is preferable and more traditional and original, others are reluctant to accept yet another identifier. People on Kodiak also seem to prefer Alutiiq because it acknowledges the region's long Russian history, and is similar to the term Aleut still used by Elders today. It is unclear if one designator will become standard for the whole region, if each sub-region will chose different designators, or if it will continue to be a matter of personal choice.

Alutiiq visual ("written") forms of communication existed throughout prehistory and after contact. Incised pebbles depicting individual faces and clothing are found frequently in archaeological sites dating from AD 1500 to AD 1300 (Saltonstall, 2010). Petroglyphs up to 1500 years old pecked into cliffs and boulders along Kodiak's outer coasts depict animals, faces and other symbols. They are believed to relate to whale hunting rituals or territory markers for family or community hunting grounds (Steffian & Counceller, 2009). Written and painted information has also been found on prehistoric wood artifacts. A 450 year-old painted wooden box panel in the Alutiiq Museum's Koniag, Inc. Karluk One collection depicts an erupting volcano, and is believed to depict an actual volcanic event from the same time period (Crowell, Steffian, & Pullar, 2001).

In the late Katchemak period of prehistory, approximately 1-2000 years ago, spear points and lances bearing "makers marks" show that hunters had personal symbols, which were used to lay claim to whales or other animals if found by others (Saltonstall, 2010). One whaling spear point in the Alutiiq Museum collection bears Cyrillic initials of a known Alutiiq whaler during the Russian period, showing this form of communication continued after contact. A little-known pictographic form of communication was used into the 1800s (Hausler Knecht, 1995b). This pictographic form was documented by W.J. Hoffman (1882), although no known physical examples of Alutiiq pictographs remain. Although visual forms of communication are part of Alutiiq history and prehistory, a formal written language was not introduced until after contact.

2.3 Changes after Contact

A Cyrillic-based alphabet for Alutiiq was developed by Russian-Alutiiq staff and students in the earliest schools on Kodiak Island in the early 1800s (Black, 2001). Althought widespread literacy was introduced by Ilia Tizhnov in the mid 19th century (Oleksa, 1981), only a handful of liturgical texts remain. Surviving texts from this period include the Lord's Prayer (1816), a catechism (1847), a primer (1848), and a Gospel of St. Matthew (1848) (Black, 2001). As Lydia Black laments in "Forgotten Literacy," although this form of written Alutiiq was used throughout the Alutiiq homeland, it quickly faded after Americanization (Black, 2001).

It is generally accepted that the Russian settlers tolerated the continued use of Alutiiq, although this was different in each community and context. As Lührmann (2000) describes, while individual prayers were translated into Alutiiq, Russian was the primary mode of communication in churches and schools – the *lingua franca* of Russian America. Alisha Drabek (Drabek, 2009) contends that although the Alutiiq language was not targeted for elimination by Russian colonists, the overarching goal was still assimilation into a Western lifestyle. However, Russian acculturation efforts were mild compared to American policies. Assimilation efforts including language suppression were greatly increased after 1867, when Alaska was sold to the United States (Drabek, 2009).

It was during the first 100 years of American rule that the Alutiiq language faced the harshest suppression. Although some villagers learned English in addition to Alutiiq and Russian, negative pressure by mission and secular schools taught parents that the Native language would stigmatize their children (Counceller & Leer, 2006). Alutiiq-speaking children learned that speaking their Native language could result in a ruler strike to the hand, a soapy rag in the mouth, or other traumatizing punishments. As an Elder recalls:

> [In] my days, when they...were against it...The school teachers used to be getting mad at us, over at Afognak...down in my first, second and third grade, you know...You couldn't say anything, no kind of words in their language (DK, Elder).

Many children of trilingual parents (Russian, Alutiiq & English) grew up monolingual, speaking only English in an effort to survive in American society (Hegna, 2004). The swift change to English created communication barriers within families, increasing the loss of cultural knowledge, subsistence practices, and self esteem along with the loss of Alutiiq language proficiency. Drabek describes that these assimilation efforts created "a debilitating lack of self esteem as [children] lost their connection to their elders and their culture" (p. 6).

It is unknown precisely how many Native speakers of Alutiiq are still living throughout the region. The *Native Peoples and Languages* map, produced in 1982, identified 900 speakers of all dialects (Krauss, 1982b). In 1994, that number had dropped by half (Krauss, 1994). A local 2003 survey of Kodiak Island identified only 45 semi or fully fluent speakers living on the island, and a number of Elders on that list have since passed away. That survey, conducted by Shauna Hegna at the Alutiiq Museum, found that .03% of Alutiiq people on the Archipelago could speak Alutiiq, and that the average age of speakers was 72 years (Hegna, 2004). Recent Elder polling in 2009 has identified 37 speakers of Kodiak Island Alutiiq residing on Kodiak Island[6].

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[6] It is difficult to find accurate estimates of speaker numbers, but Alutiiq Museum polling of fluent Elders in 2009-2010 has gathered names of 54 total fluent Kodiak Island dialect speakers residing on Kodiak Island and elsewhere. I estimate less than 150 remaining fluent speakers of all Alutiiq dialects in 2010 out of a total population of 3,500. The Central Yup'ik language, in contrast, has approximately 10,400 fluent speakers out of a total population of 25,000 according to Alaska Native Language Center estimates (Krauss, 2007).

2.4 Academic Research on the Alutiiq Language

The earliest formal scholarly work on the Alutiiq language began in the 1960s with the late linguist Irene Reed, who traveled around the Alutiiq region making recordings of the language. She overcame villagers' initial reluctance to participate by promising to carry recorded audio messages to friends and families residing in other villages around the island (Leer, 2008). These messages and her other Kodiak recordings are now housed at the Alaska Native Language Center Archive in Fairbanks. In the 1970s, Jeff Leer of the Alaska Native Language Center began fieldwork in the Kodiak area, ultimately producing a conversational dictionary (Leer, 1978). He later created a grammar book for use in his classes at the University of Alaska (Leer, 1990), and authored articles on many aspects of the language. Leer's updated, multi-dialect dictionary with over 6,000 entries is in progress and will be published by ANLC.

It was Leer who introduced the current Roman letter orthography. Leer's Alutiiq orthography was based on the Central Yup'ik orthography, which in turn was modeled on the Inuit orthography that was developed by Moravian missionaries to Canada (Leer, 2008). Although Leer introduced a number of changes to the Alutiiq orthography (e.g., the *ll* [known as the "double l"] of the original alphabet was written as an underlined l [*ellpet*, you, was written as *elpet*], and doubled vowels were written with accent marks [*suitkaaq*, flower, was written as *suitkáq*]), many of these changes were abandoned in favor of returning to the original alphabet used in the 1978 dictionary. This decision to return to an orthography without special symbols was to

enable typing without special software or keyboards, and to prevent special symbols from being lost in email transit (Leer, 2008).

2.5 Community Based Alutiiq Language Research

Early community-driven research and education on the Alutiiq language in Kodiak began in the late 1980s, with fluent Elder Nina Olsen's "Alutiiq Language Corner" article in the Kodiak Area Native Association (KANA)'s Newsletter. KANA also sponsored an adult dance group, made up of dancers from each village on Kodiak Island, and aided by visiting dancers from the Central Yup'ik region. These dancers included Larry Matfay, Mary Haakanson, Irene Coyle, Moses Malutin, Alexandria Knagin Simeonoff, and others (P. Smith, 1983). This dance group, which documented Alutiiq songs and raised awareness of Alutiiq language use on Kodiak, disbanded by the late 1980s, though a number of the original surviving participants are now involved in language program efforts.

Philomena Hausler Knecht, an archaeologist and Harvard graduate student in the early 1990s, created an Alutiiq language workbook and interactive Hypercard computer program based on her research with local Elders (Hausler Knecht, 1995a, 1995b). These efforts led to two short-lived classes at Kodiak High School and Kodiak College that had Alutiiq language content as well as cultural studies, each lasting one semester (Hegna, 2004). Hausler Knecht also developed a series of VHS instructional videos with Elder Florence Pestrikoff. However, these efforts ended at the conclusion of grant funding, and the materials developed were done before the

change back to Leer's "special character-free" orthography. Lack of materials for learning Alutiiq may have kept these materials in use despite the differences in orthography, but the VHS videos have degraded over time, and Macintosh Hypercard has become obsolete.

The first significant regional cooperative efforts to address Alutiiq language decline occurred in 2000 when the Native Village of Afognak drafted an island-wide language revitalization grant proposal to the Administration for Native Americans (ANA). Although not awarded, this organized effort solidified community interest in language planning and revitalization. A year later, an Alutiiq language planning project led by the Alutiiq Museum was funded by ANA. Between 2002 and 2003, the museum identified community-specific goals for language revitalization, put together. a language-status study, and received resolutions from all Kodiak Archipelago tribes in support of the Alutiiq Museum's continued efforts to preserve and document Alutiiq. The results were compiled in an informally-published report titled "*Yugnet Ang'alluki*: To Keep the Words – A Report of the Goals Strategies and Status of the Alutiiq Language" by Shauna Hegna (2004).

As noted in Section 2.3, Hegna's report detailed an alarming decline in speakers, but it also documented a high level of support for language revitalization. Twenty percent of the Alutiiq population on Kodiak was surveyed. Ninety-five percent of the 435 survey respondents believed that it was important for the Alutiiq people to "know their Native language" while 89 percent agreed or strongly agreed that knowing how to speak Alutiiq was an "important part of being Alutiiq" (Hegna,

2004). This strong desire for language revitalization on Kodiak continues to guide the language movement.

In 2003, the Museum formed the *Qik'rtarmiut Alutiit* Regional Language Advisory Committee (known locally as the "Qik Committee") comprised of tribal and Native corporation representatives, educational organizations, and interested individuals. This committee continues to meet monthly or bimonthly to guide language efforts. Also in 2003, Hegna, then Language Coordinator for the Alutiiq Museum, and April Laktonen Counceller (the researcher in this study and current Language Manager), then the Museum's Language and Education Outreach Specialist, became the first Alutiiq language apprentices, under the teaching of Language Masters, Nick Alokli and Florence Pestrikoff. They used the Master-Apprentice model popularized by Leanne Hinton, which relies on learner-guided immersion activities between adult learners and fluent speakers (Hinton, Vera, & Steele, 2002).

In 2004, ANA awarded the Alutiiq Museum a three-year Language Implementation grant for the *Qik'rtarmiut Alutiit* Master-Apprentice project. The primary goals of this project were to teach Alutiiq to a cohort of Apprentices using immersion techniques, create recordings of those lessons for the museum's archive, and create language-learning materials and lesson plans. The original Language Masters for this project were Phyllis Peterson (Kaguyak/Akhiok), Dennis Knagin (Afognak), Sophie Katelnikoff Shepherd (Karluk/Larsen Bay), Nick Alokli (Akhiok), Mary Haakanson (Old Harbor), Stella Krumrey (Kaguyak/Old Harbor), Paul Kahutak (Woody Island/Old Harbor), Florence Pestrikoff (Akhiok/Old Harbor), Thayo Brandal

(Afognak/Port Lions), Christine Von Scheele (Afognak/Port Lions), and the late "Papa" George Inga, Sr. (Old Harbor). The number of Apprentices ranged from 10-12 throughout the project, with some dropping out after one or two years, and a few joining the project in the second or third year. This project created a small group of semi-fluent speakers, and drastically increased local interest for learning Alutiiq, an interest that the language program's small staff struggles to address by producing a variety of language learning materials under small grant projects.

The Master-Apprentice project was followed in 2007 by a National Science Foundation (NSF) project entitled *Alutiiq Living Words* funded by the Documenting Endangered Languages Program. This three-year project ends in the summer of 2011. Under this project, semi-fluent field researchers (many of them former apprentices) make recordings with fluent speakers for a language archive. Audio and video selections from this archive are transcribed and translated for an interactive Alutiiq language web portal (http://alutiiqmuseum.org/portal). This project also supports the Alutiiq New Words Council (*Nuta'at Niugnelistat* – New Word Makers), the subject of this study.

2.6 Rationale for the New Words Council

Participants in the language program felt that a New Words Council was needed. The increase in Alutiiq language instruction in the schools and other efforts to use the language led them to notice that there were limited words for modern items and concepts. This general lack in the lexicon is related to the decline of the language's

speaker numbers after two hundred and fifty years of cultural change brought by Russian, American, and other Western settlers (Crowell et al., 2001).

While terminology in all languages tends to fall out of use or naturally emerge depending on changing cultural conditions, Alutiiq words were being forgotten, but no new words were occurring. Few "natural" instances of new words creation had occurred in the 20th Century. Instead, many words faded from the lexicon with the death of every fluent speaker.

Rather than creating new Alutiiq words, fluent speakers report that they would typically substitute an English word without any nativization (N. Alokli, Personal Communication, 2008). Instead of developing words for new technologies of the 20th Century, speakers simply inserted needed English words: *Radio kwarsgu* – "Turn on the radio," or made up ad-hoc words or phrases to describe the needed term in the language. An alien from outer space might be described as a *suuruaq* – a "fake or unreal person." These words, while easily understood in context by other speakers, were not typically adopted by other speakers due to the infrequency of Alutiiq language use. Individual speakers, isolated from each other in separate remote villages, did not have opportunities to share their neologisms through conversation, and new words remained with the individuals who created them.

In the initial years of the museum's language program, when Elders were asked how to say different items in the classroom, they would either construct a word on the spot, or tell students no word existed. Learners attempting to use the language in the workplace faced similar difficulties for items like computers and cell phones.

Language program participants became concerned that different speakers would develop different terms for the same item. With no standardization around the island, some believed multiple new words for the same item could impede island-wide communication. A different worry was that if learners were told no word existed, this would feed into the perception that Alutiiq was not a viable language for modern contexts. Alutiiq language program participants believed formal new words creation was needed in order to keep the language healthy for contemporary use.

As a first step, Museum staff had visited the Hawaiian language programs in 2003, and met Larry Kimura, the chair of the Hawaiian Lexicon Committee. The Hawaiian committee, established in the mid 1980s, has published two dictionaries of new terms (Kimura & Counceller, 2009; *Māmaka Kaiao*, 2003). Kimura agreed to collaborate and consult with the Kodiak group as they begun new words creation, providing initial training for the Elders and sharing information about the experiences of the Hawaiian group. After grant funding was awarded, the first New Words Council meeting was held in Kodiak in September 2007.

2.7 A Typical New Words Council Meeting

This section is an overview of the activities that occur leading up to and during a New Words Council meeting. It is intended to provide readers with a glimpse into what is seen by only a handful of participants and guests. No two meetings are the same, but this overview shows the typical tasks, activities, and interactions that characterize many of the monthly meetings of the New Words Council. *Note that as*

this section is in narrative form, it is written in third person, with the Alutiiq Language Manager (ALM) being myself, the researcher in this study.

After the first year or so of the NSF-funded *Alutiiq Living Words* project that initiated the New Words Council, the meetings have settled into an informal pattern. Changes have occurred through out the first three years of the council – some that have settled out of habits, and others that have been the result of efforts to improve productivity and participation. Now, in the third year of the New Words Council, there are certain tasks that go into planning, preparing for, and conducting a meeting that are similar month-to-month.

The planning for a New Words Council meeting commences at the end of the previous monthly meeting. Project staff ask Elders if any will be out of town or have other conflicts in the following month. This is compared to staff schedules and known public events. They then choose a tentative date and time for the next meeting. Meetings are normally scheduled for the afternoons and last approximately 2 hours.

There are many preparations needed to set up each meeting. The Language Outreach Specialist (LOS)[7] will call to reserve the Natives of Kodiak, Inc. (NOK) conference room, located upstairs from the Alutiiq Museum. If this room is already reserved, as has happened on a few occasions, the meeting will be moved to an

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[7] The LOS Position has been held by three individuals over the course of the NSF project. The position is currently vacant as of fall 2010, and will be unfilled through the close of the grant in Spring 2011. The LOS during the majority of the research period in 2008 was Peter Boskofsky, who currently acts as a program volunteer and consultant.

alternate site, such as the Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak's conference room[8] a few blocks away. In addition to the room reservation, the LOS also sets up an audio conference line for out of town participants to call in toll free.

The Alutiiq Language Manager (ALM) and LOS work together to compile the agenda for each meeting. The agenda consists of several sections: Introductions and Opening Prayer, Words to Confirm, Words in Discussion, and Coming Up Words. These sections are loosely based on the agenda format used by the Hawaiian Lexicon Committee (Kimura, 2007). When desired, staff also add a "Remembered Words" section to the agenda. Remembered Words are words remembered by Elders or requested by learners that participants wish to discuss, to verify dialectical differences, elicit difficult to document words, or to simply verify that other speakers know the word. While remembered words do not fall under the initial goals of the council, this section was added by request from participants.

Words for the agenda can be suggested by learners, staff, or Elders. Often, clusters of related words, like medical terms or tools, will be added to the agenda at once. When words are first added, they appear in the Coming Up section at the end of the agenda, meaning they have not yet been discussed at any New Words Council meeting. They then progress up the agenda to the Words to Confirm section over the course of a few months. The ALM will usually provide a suggested word in Alutiiq

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[8] The NOK conference room can be used for Museum business as part of the Museum's annual condo fee to the Corporation owning the building. The Sun'aq tribal conference room, when used, is donated by the tribe.

for the needed word, meant primarily to give the Elders a starting point. If she is unable to provide an Alutiiq term, then a root word or even an English phrase describing the item is provided so that the Elders have something to work with, even if the suggestion is worth little more than a good laugh.

When a word has been discussed in a meeting, it will be moved up to the In Discussion section if no choice was made, or to the Words to Confirm section if an initial decision was reached. All chosen words are reconfirmed at the next month's meeting, so that Elders have an opportunity to think about them, refine them, or send them back to discussion. After a word has been chosen and successfully confirmed in the next month's meeting it is added to the Master New Words List managed by program staff and made available on the project web site at http://alutiiqmuseum.org/portal.

To notify participants of upcoming meetings, the staff makes announcements at the weekly Alutiiq Language Club, monthly *Qik'rtarmiut Alutiit* Regional Language Advisory Committee meetings, and at field research sessions with Elders. Staff members individually call and invite Elders to the meetings, and send out an email broadcast to those who use the Internet – primarily learners. Staff members and learners arrange rides to the meeting for Elders who do not drive, and arrange a call-in location for Elders or learners who wish to participate as a group from outside of Kodiak. Sometimes no one will call in on the audioconference, while at other times learners will be calling from Washington or New Mexico, or Elders will be calling in from outlying villages.

On the day of a meeting, staff members will send out an email reminder to the learners, usually with the agenda attached for their reference. They also place reminder phone calls to the Elders and reconfirm attendance and transportation. Sometimes an Elder who had planned to go is not feeling well, or is making bread that day. Likewise, an Elder who said he or she could not attend may now be able to.

Much of the morning on meeting days is devoted to gathering needed items and planning who will bring them to the meeting and help transport Elders. Staff members print up agendas and a sign-in sheet to track participation. They plan how a meeting will be documented (audio, video, or both), and determine who will get the needed equipment to the meeting room. Usually the person with fewer Elders to pick up will be tasked with transporting the recording equipment, overhead projector, and other bulky items, to leave free hands for the person helping Elders to the meeting. Often, staff members make multiple trips from museum offices and vehicles to the conference room. The ALM will usually pick up snacks and refreshments for the Elders on her lunch break, before picking up anyone needing a ride to the meeting. The LOS will typically handle the recording equipment and get it set up in the room before attendees arrive.

Before the meeting starts, staff make hot water for tea and brew coffee, setting out snacks and other drinks on the counter at one end of the room. They hook up the projector to a laptop to project the agenda on the screen. The recording equipment is readied for pressing "record" as soon as the meeting starts. The ALM dials in to the audio conference number and checks if any participants have called in. Learners serve

coffee and other refreshments to some Elders, while other participants serve themselves. As council members and learners trickle in to the conference room, the ALM tells any off-site participants on the audioconference how many more minutes it will be until the meeting begins. Sometimes if a caller is an Alutiiq speaker, those present will greet the person and get caught up, using mixed Alutiiq and English. They ask each other who is in the village and who is visiting Kodiak or Anchorage, how the weather is, and if planes are flying. Some learners who are calling in from a distance are questioned or teased in Alutiiq by their teachers to let them practice responding.

Meetings start typically 5-15 minutes after the scheduled start time. Participants begin the meeting at a time based on the number of expected participants, weather conditions, and readiness of those who are present, as well as how late it is past the scheduled start time. The project staff place the sign-in sheet at the head of the table, and sometimes pass it around the room after people have arrived, if not all have signed in. If anyone arrives after the start of a meeting, the group will pause and explain what has happened already to orient the Elder to what is being discussed.

After the ALM announces the meeting has started, the participants introduce themselves around the table. This is merely a formality most of the time, as they know each other already, but it is helpful to those on the audioconference to know who is present, as well as to the occasional visiting participant who does not know everyone. Participants usually introduce themselves in Alutiiq, saying *Cama'i, Gui [Name]* "Hello, I am [Name]." They will often also say who they are representing or their village membership, and whether they are an Elder or learner. Those on the audio

conference will state where they are calling in from, and often get personal greetings in reply from those present on-site. The shared information is not new to the participants involved, who have known each other for years or decades, but it is an important part of the ceremony of the agenda.

Introductions are followed by an opening prayer. Participants go to different churches, and some do not attend church at all, but the opening prayer is another important ceremonial act in the opening of a New Words Council meeting, as it is for many Alutiiq gatherings. The ALM asks for any volunteers to provide a prayer, or asks if the Elders wish the learners to recite the Lord's Prayer. If an Elder says a prayer, it is usually one of two or three elders. Their prayer is usually composed on the spot, and asks God for guidance and help as we create words, and in our larger quest to teach, learn, and bring back the language. Learners who do the opening prayer recite The Lord's Prayer, which was translated by Elders in the Museum's language program in 2005 (Counceller & Leer, 2006). The group members bow their heads during the prayer and finish with "Amen."

The agenda is projected on a screen at the front of the room, and the ALM highlights the current section being discussed, making notes and changing spellings on the agenda as they go through the lists. The participants follow the projected agenda as she makes changes and notes if a word is approved or remains in discussion. This projection method was introduced during the first year of the New Words Council, so that learners could write down the spellings of words and understand their meanings,

but has also contributed to some Elders – who grew up without a written language – becoming more literate in Alutiiq.

The first item of business on the agenda is the "Words to Confirm." The ALM reports to the group that these are the words chosen in the previous meeting. These words must be confirmed at a second meeting before they can be moved to the Master New Word List. She begins reading the words, first in Alutiiq, then in English, and for the benefit of learners present, the literal translation, sometimes broken into morphemes of root, postbase and suffix[9]. To seek approval or confirmation of a word, the ALM will ask *Asirciquq-qaa?* "Will it be good?" or *Una guani asirciqiuq?* "Is this one here good?"

The "voting members" of the New Words Council are the fluent speakers, although the learners play an active and important role. A learner summed up her understanding of the official membership:

> My understanding is that the members of the New Words Council, sort of the voting members are the Elders who are fluent speakers, but that there are Apprentices welcome in, and that they've been encouraged to contribute thoughts and questions to the discussion, but it's, I think, I don't know, in a sense it is an unspoken sense… the Apprentices would feel, or at least *I* would feel that the Elders have the last say (AD, learner).

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[9] Alutiiq, as with other Eskimoan languages, is *agglutinative.* A typical word may contain a root word, postbases – which change the meaning of the preceding root, and suffixes – which reflect the identity of the subject.

Elders will often ask learners for their opinion on certain words, particularly for modern items. Learners try to downplay their significance but they definitely do have an important role, and can alter the direction of discussion with the types of questions they ask. See Sections 8.6.5 and 8.6.6 for analysis of learner and Elder agency.

Often a word in the Words to Confirm section will be altered in the next meeting. If the changes are considered small, the ALM will ask the committee if it needs to be confirmed again the next month, or if the change is minor enough to be moved directly to the Master New Words List. If the change is significant or a different word altogether, the word is left in the Words to Confirm section for confirmation the following month.

After confirming or returning to discussion the words in the Words To Confirm section, the group may take a short break or continue directly to the In Discussion section. As a word is discussed, the ALM will type the various options on the agenda being projected, and intermittently repeat all of the choices in play to the group to see if they would like to drop any, or if one stands out as a better choice to a majority of the participants. The discussion takes place in mixed English and Alutiiq, with more "business" being conducted in English, and the words repeated frequently in Alutiiq. Elders rarely discuss in Alutiiq, unless they are clarifying a usage between themselves, or providing an example sentence of the word being discussed.

The ALM must pay close attention to the discussion to try to get a feel for the will of the group. If it seems one choice is favored, she will ask the group to confirm. If most verbally agree and nobody expresses other wishes, she states that it is

confirmed. If even a small minority express continued preference for another word, that word may stay in discussion, or the ALM will suggest approving both words. Eventually one of three possibilities will occur: the word will be tabled, more than one word will be chosen, or one will win out. A learner describes the decision-making process as follows:

> It's nice that it's not structured in a way that is a voting thing, or they have to have a quorum, or that there [is] not the sort of artificial bureaucratic structure that's laid upon it. The Elders that are present in the room, and those Elders decide if they're comfortable moving forward, or if you know, if so-and-so's not here, and I think they might dissent on this, we're going to hold it until next time. So it's nice that that arrangement is consensus based, and people present in the room look out for those who are not there (AD, learner).

The process is often called consensus among Indigenous groups, but it is not consensus, if defined as everyone agreeing. It is a consensus that we will allow the chosen word to be approved, while also allowing some to express their disagreement. While members sometimes will agree, other times, the minority will agree to let the others prevail.

If there is significant or lengthy discussion about a word, the ALM may ask the council members if it is their desire to table the discussion. This can happen after a few minutes of discussion or after a single word discussion takes up a sizeable portion of a meeting – it all depends on how interested the Elders are in continuing. The ALM asks in Alutiiq "*Keluwararu-qaa*?" – "should we set it aside for now?" and the Elders

may agree. Occasionally, however, an Elder may return to a tabled word in the same meeting. If this occurs, learners and staff simply follow along with the Elders' desire to return the item to discussion.

In a few cases, where it is difficult to discern the opinion of the group, the staff member leading the discussion may verbally poll the Elders. In one case, however, an anonymous vote was taken. This attempt at balloting in the November, 2008 meeting did not result in a successful decision. In this meeting, the LOS distributed slips of paper where Elders could write the number for their choice for the word "election." The result in that meeting was a tie between two words, with the would-be tie-breaker voting "Peter!" The secret ballot method was abandoned, and the word eventually approved for "election" two months later, was *piugcikengan*, "the one that you want."

In some cases, words have remained on the agenda for months at a time, with Elders having difficulty agreeing on the best word. One of these words was "sunglasses." Keeping the discussion from getting too serious, one Elder from Larsen Bay joked "*Sun'ami macartaanitukut!*" – "In Kodiak, we never get sun!" An Elder from Akhiok responded, "Yeah, why are we creating this word anyway?" This exchange was met with laughter by the group, before the word was tabled again until the following month.

The meetings are led by language program staff members, but discussion is often guided by participants. Learners will often ask Elders to repeat a word a number of times so that they can get it written down. Sometimes a learner will ask the ALM for a literal translation or a spelling, and if she does not know, she asks the Elders for

help. Elders frequently ask each other for their opinions. In the August 2008 New Words Council meeting, with two similar choices remaining in discussion for "microwave oven," One Elder polled her colleagues:

(FP, Elder): *Naliak-mi?* – "Which one?"

(IC, Elder): They're both the same.

(MH, Elder): They're the same.

The group ended up choosing *cukasqaq kenirwik* – "fast cooking place," a non-possessed form, over *cukasqam kenirwia* – "the fast one's cooker," a possessed form, after a suggestion by the ALM that speakers can use the possessed form if needed in a sentence, agreeing with the Elders that it wasn't really a different word. It is usually the younger Elders who ask the older ones to provide words or repeat variations. A few of the Elders do not say much unless asked for their opinion. Sometimes the ALM will go around the table and ask each Elder in turn for their opinion on a word.

Elders will sometimes have side conversations with each other about an alternative, after which someone will ask them to tell the group what they came up with, or the more outgoing Elder may tell the others what their partner suggested. Participants also ask each other for sub-dialectical variations or ask elders of different villages to verify that the words are the same around the island.

Occasionally when the group is deadlocked between two choices and they are not interested in approving both, the ALM will conduct a preliminary poll to determine a front-runner. For these cases to proceed with approval, the minority must still acquiesce to the majority by not continuing discussion on their preferred

alternative. By remaining silent they signal that it is okay to proceed with the more popular word, despite having their own preference.

Sometimes the council will decide to pass more than one word for the desired term. This may occur when members sense a minority feels strongly about their chosen alternative, or when the difference seems to be split along sub-dialectical or village lines. In the January 2008 New Words Council meeting, the members chose to approve two words for "taxicab":

(PB, learner/staff): Do you guys want to use both of the words?"

(IC, Elder): I think it's lovely. Not to limit it. Because one person will understand it one way, and another person will understand it another. What do you think [FP]?

(FP, Elder): *Pingaqaqa* (I like it)...And you MH?

(MH, Elder): "Uh Huh"

(PB, learner/staff): And [KC]?

(KC, Elder): I just came to listen, I don't know.

(PB, learner/staff): [Name]?

(E1, Elder): It's good.

(PB, learner/staff): Alright, so, does Taxi... Um, wait, maybe we should talk with [Name]. Port Lions, does that sound good?

(KN, learner): [on phone from Port Lions] She says that's good...

The choices for taxicab, however, did not progress past the Words to Confirm section until one word, *nall'iryarausqaq kaaRaq*, was approved in April, 2008.

It is also acknowledged on occasion that certain differences in suffix choice or pronunciation are the prerogative of each individual speaker. "It's just personal preference," Elders will say, indicating the words can be interchangeable, although linguistically there may be a slight meaning difference due to suffix choice.

Remembered words, if there are any, are usually listed after the "In Discussion" section, although any word discussion can become a discussion of a remembered word, if the Elders feel that there must be an Alutiiq word already for the item on the agenda. This section may include words that Elders have had trouble remembering, are not in the dictionary but are presumed to exist, or rare words an Elder remembers that she or he wants to discuss with the other Elders on the council. One such word is *usuqaq-*, a verb meaning "to get worn out." One Elder remembered the word, usually used for clothing or other items, but wanted to know if other Elders used it creatively, such as when describing a person. The other Elders acknowledged this use in the April, 2008 meeting. Remembered words are added to the New Words master list without needing confirmation the following month, but are given a notation that they are remembered rather than created, along with the initials of speakers who remember them to allow dialectical documentation.

A word in the "remembered" section plagued the council for a number of months in 2009-2010. Learners wanted to know the word for shark, which was listed as *iraluruaq* ("like a moon") in the dictionary (Leer, 1978). This is the same as the listed word for jellyfish, and the Elders did not accept this as the correct word. They agreed that there was a word for it, but nobody could remember it. At each meeting,

they would discuss possibilities for new words for shark, but many thought an Elder in Old Harbor might know the old word, though he was difficult to contact. After being on the agenda for months, the council, not having had luck consulting other Elders, chose a new word – *arlluguaq* ("like an orca"), which was reconfirmed and added to the Master New Words List in the January 2010 meeting. Ironically a week later, a visiting learner from Old Harbor mentioned at language club that she had heard the word for shark from an Elder in Old Harbor. Unfortunately, she could only remember that it may have started with the root *mangar-*, the same root as 'dolphin.' The Elders present found this situation humorous, but since all present were still curious to know the original word for shark, the learner was instructed to call or email immediately the next time she had an opportunity to ask. Sadly, the learner was unable to document the word she thought she had heard previously.

If the group has not taken a *nuusniik* ("bathroom") break by this point in the meeting, they often do so before the "coming up" section. Learners often help get coffee refills for Elders or pass around snack plates. Participants stretch their legs and have personal conversations with each other before sitting down to finish the agenda. Sometimes, even if a break has been called, participants will return to discussion of a word that was interesting or not settled on yet.

Most meetings will have interruptions of some sort. Learners sometimes quiet crying babies or pass them around among the Elders. For a number of meetings in 2008, the ALM brought her one-year-old to meetings, and was assisted by other learners and Elders in watching her child as she coordinated the meeting. Elders

regularly get calls on their cell phones, often programmed with entertaining musical ring tones by their children and grandchildren. It is not surprising for an Elder to take a cell phone call during a meeting, speaking with their family members and telling them when they need a ride. These meetings are considered informal and family friendly, so these interruptions are commonplace and not commented on. This type of family atmosphere is typical in many Alutiiq community events and meetings.

The final section of the agenda is the "Coming Up Words." The ALM reminds the council that these words have not yet been discussed in a meeting, and have been submitted by learners, staff or Elders. They discuss possibilities, starting with the suggested word, in the same manner as the In Discussion section. If a decision is reached, the word will appear in next month's Words To Confirm section. If the council gets through the agenda, or two hours goes by without finishing the agenda and participants are beginning to tire, the meeting will come to a close.

The ALM asks Elders about tentative dates for the next meeting, and people begin cleaning up the room. Learners ask Elders if they have rides home, and make arrangements for those who need transportation. The ALM urges Elders to take home any remaining food, while the LOS packs up the recording equipment. Participants ask when they'll see each other at the next event or meeting. Staff begin carrying items down to their vehicles or escort Elders downstairs who need rides. Learners finish straightening up the room, turn out the lights, and exit – the meeting is over for the month.

2.8 Conclusion

This chapter has provided background on the Alutiiq language and its history, the history of Alutiiq language research on Kodiak, and a history of the language revitalization program at the Alutiiq Museum. Research on this Eskimo-Aleut language on the Kodiak Archipelago began formally in the 1970s, and has increased in recent years along with the Alutiiq Language revitalization effort. The current language revitalization effort has been largely led by the Alutiiq Museum and other community partners through a succession of grant-funded projects.

This chapter has also provided an overview of a typical New Words Council meeting from planning through conclusion, as a way of helping readers understand what meetings are like for participants. This is intended to provide contextual and background information to set up an examination of the New Words Council in terms of language and heritage revitalization, as will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Chapter 3:

Literature Review

"Success for us is not an end product" (Anonymous).

3.1 Introduction

Language revitalization movements are a type of language policy and planning that also form a subset of heritage revitalization – the strategic recovery of cultural traditions (Clifford, 2004). The New Words Council is a language planning activity conducted within a wider Indigenous language revitalization movement. Language revitalization projects such as the New Words Council are not just about reversing language loss for its own sake. Participation in such projects may in fact be a marker of wider social movements – heritage revitalization efforts related to self-determination, healing, and Indigenous identity (Clifford, 2004; Fishman, 1991).

This chapter will outline the core concepts, issues, and controversies in the study of heritage revitalization – the type of broad social movement of which the New Words Council is an example. In order to focus more specifically on Indigenous language revitalization projects like the New Words Council, it will also be necessary to explore the literature on Language Policy and Planning (LP&P). LP&P, like heritage revitalization, can be understood in terms of larger social forces that are not just about language (Fishman, 1991; Hinton, 2001; Paulston, 1994; Wright, 2004). Possibilities and issues in the field of endangered language revitalization will be explored, with an emphasis on local, grassroots planning and self-determination

(Amery, 2001; Baldauf, 2006; Edwards, 2001; Romero-Little, 2006; Sims, 2006). This will foreshadow how a small, community-based language revitalization project can be understood in terms of its cultural and social role within the community, based on its shared characteristics with broader heritage movements. Additionally, Indigenous perspectives including TribalCrit (Brayboy, 2006) will be proposed as orientations for representing Indigenous efforts to revitalize languages – as alternatives to past academic critiques of heritage revitalization.

3.2 Language Revitalization and Heritage Revitalization

The New Words Council is an example of heritage revitalization – a many faceted effort by an Indigenous group to reclaim cultural traditions suppressed during colonization (Briggs, 1996; L. Smith, 1999). Heritage revitalization can include "oral-historical research, cultural evocation and explanation (exhibits, festivals, publications, films, tourist sites), language description and pedagogy, community-based archaeology, art production, marketing, and criticism" (Clifford, 2004). In essence, heritage revitalization is a movement related to goals of self-determination and sovereignty, and often occurs alongside other ethnic-based political or social movements (Clifford, 2004; Hanson, 1989). Heritage revitalization should be understood in terms of the social and political context in which it is occurring.

Anthropologists have long sought to understand heritage revitalization movements and the reasons behind them. Wallace (1956) describes revitalization efforts as the result of a collective feeling that aspects of contemporary existence are

not as members of a group would wish, and therefore strategic efforts are undertaken to change that reality.

James Clifford relates heritage movements to political and social realities – primarily the resistance of cultural groups to hegemonic domination (Clifford, 2004). He says, "for Indigenous people, long marginalized or made to disappear, physically and ideologically, to say 'We exist' in performances and publications is a powerful political act" (Clifford, 2004, p. 9). While some might assume that heritage revitalization is confined to cultural celebration, it is in fact often intricately linked to other social movements. Cultural traditions and ethnographic information can be used by Indigenous peoples or dominant governments to reinforce or deny Indigenous legal claims – adding a political dimension to heritage efforts focused on cultural traditions. As described by Clifford (2004), what counts as "tradition" is never politically neutral.

Similar to Clifford's (2004) descriptions of heritage work on Kodiak, members of the Kodiak New Words Council share a sense of resistance, however implicit, with the larger Alutiiq heritage movement (Crowell, 2004; Crowell et al., 2001). After decades of catastrophic events, forced acculturation, and loss of heritage, the Alutiiq community is strategically returning to lost cultural forms as a way to recover and heal from historical trauma (Pullar, 1992). Beginning with the revitalization of arts and an increase in historical research, the language is now being addressed in a multifaceted effort to regain control for, and responsibility over, Alutiiq heritage and community life. Because of the strategic nature of language and heritage revitalization, the revitalization efforts in the Alutiiq community have been interpreted by some as

inauthentic (Mason, 1996). This theme in academic literature is often called the 'invention of tradition'(Briggs, 1996; Mason, 1996).

3.3 Academic Critiques of Heritage and Language Revitalization

As anthropologists and other scholars try to make sense of emergent and changing forms of ethnic identification, some have focused on the invention of tradition or accuracy and authenticity of various Indigenous 'traditions' (Clifford, 2004). Perhaps due to the hostile response from many Indigenous groups, Invention scholarship has begun to fade from the literature. However, language revitalization projects are now receiving similar treatment about authenticity, from academic perspectives, as well as sometimes from within the communities themselves (Wong, 1999). This concern over authenticity in language revitalization has connections to invention concerns over heritage revitalization.

The central argument of Invention scholars, is that many of the cultural forms that today's ethnic groups look to as authentic markers of cultural heritage, are in fact, not authentic at all (Briggs, 1996; Friedman, 1992). Some Invention scholars have worked to deconstruct the truth and falsity of Indigenous cultural forms through studies of their accuracy (Friedman, 1992; Handler & Linnekin, 1984; Hanson, 1989). For example, Hanson (1989) researched and deconstructed traditional Maori legends and found many of them to be based on stories and accounts introduced by settlers and early historians. Invention of tradition claims have been made about Hawaiian,

Canadian-Quebecois, and Alutiiq cultural revitalization movements, among others (Handler & Linnekin, 1984; Keesing, 1989; Mason, 1996).

The unusual thing about 'Invention' scholarship is that while all accept that tradition is more of a modern negotiation than a seamless link to the past (Handler & Linnekin, 1984), these modern negotiations are simultaneously deconstructed as inventions. Thus, "the invention of tradition is a double edged sword that criticizes the assumptions of cultural continuity while implicitly reprimanding those who would identify with such cultural fantasies today" (Friedman, 1992). That is to say, even though Invention scholarship takes cultural change as a given, those who are research subjects are critiqued for their strongly-held beliefs in their own cultural forms, whether they are historic legends, customs, or linguistic practices.

Language revitalization projects, perhaps because they take place over an abbreviated time frame, are often implemented with full knowledge that the resulting linguistic form will not be authentic in the way Elders remember the language of their youth. The process of revitalization causes changes in the way language is spoken and thought about in the community (Whiteley, 2003). Evaluations of authenticity in language revitalization are similar to those of heritage revitalization.

Scholars as well as community members have critiqued language revitalization for a number of reasons, primarily that the newly revitalized language will never be as rich, natural, or uncorrupted by other languages (i.e. English) as the language was in the past (Warner et al., 2007; Wong, 1999). Whiteley (2003) suggests that languages in revitalization become "reified," or objectified, by their communities, often changing

speech from an unconscious method of communication into a performative act (p. 712). Whitely's analysis contributes to our understanding of social forces like hegemony and globalization in language revitalization movements, but his critique of revitalization leaves no alternative other then presumably, to let Native languages die rather than be despoiled by performativity and objectification.

In communities where few or no speakers remain, and individuals learn to speak the language from recordings and past documentation, some feel that the revitalized form by nature must be inauthentic. Warner, et al. (2007) argue for revitalization in such cases. They contend that if modern Hebrew (which was brought back from written texts) is considered legitimate even though it is not the same as Biblical Hebrew, then an Indigenous language should also be considered legitimate, even though its revitalized form will be "imperfect" (Warner et al., 2007, p. 59). They "feel strongly that each community, not outside linguists and not members of other communities, has the right to make decisions about whether to revitalize a community's language despite the changes caused by doing so" (p. 61).

There is not always community agreement, however, over issues of authenticity in language revitalization. Debate may occur over the proper way to revitalize a language while minimizing linguistic change. Some Hopi communities have resisted group efforts to write the language for school to protect cultural knowledge, and prevent changing the oral language by introducing writing (Whiteley, 2003). Some Native speakers in Hawai'i have criticized the language of the university

and school-based revitalization movement led by second-language Hawaiian speakers, calling it "University Hawaiian" (Wong, 1999).

Indigenous groups concerned with language survival do not let these concerns prevent them from saving their languages. Some see language revitalization as an act of self-determination, and recognize outside critiques over legitimacy and authenticity as paternalistic colonialism (Warner et al., 2007). Others respond to insider critiques about language revitalization and language change by conducting language revitalization in as close accordance with community values as possible. In terms of new words creation, this means using techniques that have perceived traditional or historical connections (Fishman, 2006; Warner et al., 2007; Wong, 1999).

3.4 Critiques of 'Invention' Scholarship

The primary critique of Invention scholarship is that it perpetuates rhetorical imperialism and takes little responsibility for the real-world implications of invention claims for the Indigenous community. Rhetorical imperialism privileges the interpretations of scholars over those of research subjects, thereby perpetuating the authority of the academy (Lyons, 2000). Cultural heritage accepted and claimed as traditional by ethnic groups is analyzed by the 'objective outsider' as construction – in response to social or political factors such as internalization of colonizer discourse, or as strategic efforts to gain political power and legitimacy.

Rhetorical imperialism is evident in the ways Native scholar and community perspectives and interpretations about heritage revitalization are delegitimized in favor

of Western academic analyses and theoretical models (Haakanson, 2001; L. Smith, 1999; Trask, 1991). Other interpretations of cultural revitalization on Kodiak focus on healing, justice, and a reconnection with history – analyses compatible with Indigenous understandings of their own experiences, and of this study (Clifford, 2004; Lührmann, 2004; Pullar, 1992).

Rhetorical imperialism has been experienced on Kodiak when community interpretations have been denied in favor of academic theoretical frameworks – even as those analyses were decried as harmful by the Alutiiq community. Arthur Mason's 1996 M.A. thesis is a case in point. Central to Mason's argument is his assertion that Alutiiq corporate elites have appropriated cultural symbols from "unrelated" past cultures[10] for use in an "identity industry:"

> Perhaps this current logo-ization of Alutiiq culture and heritage is in essence a commoditization of 'culture and heritage,' and represents a social strategy used by assimilated indigenous peoples oriented toward the maximizing of material and symbolic profit (Mason, 1996).

Mason's use of participant interviews as data to establish the contrived nature of Alutiiq identity, and the assumptions made about the status motivations of Alutiiq leaders angered some participants in his study (R. Madsen, personal communication, July 20th, 2009).

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[10] Although some in the academic community such as Mason held on to the belief that the prehistoric residents of Kodiak, as represented by the human remains in the Larsen Bay case, were not culturally affiliated with today's Alutiiq people, "the sum of the evidence argued in favor of the repatriation" conducted by the Smithsonian. That is to say, there was a strong scientific argument for cultural affiliation. (Bray & Killion, 1994, p. 7).

Judge Roy Madsen, an Alutiiq leader and Elder interviewed by Mason for his thesis, was one of many Alutiiq tribal members who disagreed with Mason's portrayal of community members. In a letter addressed to Mason, he stated:

> Your statement that Alutiiq leaders had to borrow their image of Nativeness from western experts couldn't be further from the truth! Many of the Alutiiq leaders have come from the villages and those who are from urban areas have had much contact with village people. They didn't need to borrow an image of Nativeness from someone else (R. Madsen, Personal Correspondence, 1996).

The perception that Mason's thesis was a "low blow" (R. Madsen, Personal Correspondence, 1996) to Alutiiq people is unfortunately the kind of response researchers can expect when their analysis directly contradicts the understandings, beliefs, and explanations put forth by community members themselves.

Indigenous critiques of the academy have decried a persistent denial of authority for Indigenous voices and perspectives (Brayboy & Deyhle, 2000; Deloria, 2004; Trask, 1991). While contemporary research in Indigenous communities now frequently includes community perspectives (Carothers, 2008; Jolles, 2006; Kral, 2006), vestiges of old colonial attitudes remain (L. Smith, 1999). Sven Haakanson, an Alutiiq scholar, has critiqued the tendency to ask Native scholars for discussions of personal identity (as data sources) rather than asking for academic contributions in a truly collaborative fashion (Haakanson, 2001). Along similar lines, Brayboy & Deyhle (2000), have argued that "Indigenous people, both as researchers and participants, hold the keys to getting, *analyzing*, and reporting 'good data'...in studies examining

their lived experiences" [emphasis added] (p. 168). For these and other Native scholars, inclusion of the Native voice and perspective is indispensible for respectful and valid scholarship.

'Invention' scholars have noticed the backlash against their work. As Hanson (1991) remarks, "scholarly discourse about culture invention sometimes gets noticed by the people whose culture we are analyzing, and they tend to get angry about it" (p. 449). Some have responded defensively, claiming that the term *invention* within anthropological scholarship has a different (less judgmental) gloss than in popular use. Others have simply claimed that Indigenous readers and media reports have missed the point. Invention scholars agree that *all* tradition is "invented." The question becomes one of focus. Is the purpose to deconstruct and expose examples of Indigenous cultural "invention" (Dombrowsky, 2004; Keesing, 1989; Mason, 1996), or is the purpose to understand the sociopolitical contexts in which these efforts occur (Clifford, 2004; Friedman, 1992, 2003; Handler & Linnekin, 1984)?

Some have struck back at the Indigenous scholars and communities who have criticized their assertions. A heated debate played out in the *Contemporary Pacific* between anthropologist Roger Keesing (Keesing, 1989, 1991) and Haunani-Kay Trask (Trask, 1991), an Indigenous Hawaiian scholar. Trask took strong issue with Keesing's descriptions of invented tradition on Hawaii, connecting his work with colonial privilege (Trask, 1991). Keesing, feeling he was misinterpreted, then questioned the authority of Trask and other educated Natives to speak for their people. For Keesing, the "bourgeois life styles" of the educated Natives distanced them from

their poor (and apparently more authentic) cousins (Keesing, 1991, p. 169). The level of furor in this exchange shows how deeply contested the issue of heritage is for Indigenous groups and the academics who study them.

This denial of cultural authenticity inherent in some Invention scholarship can have real-life consequences (Clifford, 2004). Indigenous groups may feel that their cultural identity is being analyzed out of existence, or that more important aspects of continuing culture are being overlooked. As Friedman (2003) discusses in relation to Hawaiian language revitalization efforts, "The strands and fragments that are built into reconstituted identities are not mere intellectual objects, they are integrated into more powerful matrices of social existence than are assumed to exist by intellectualizing observers" (p. 747). For Indigenous groups, the revitalization of culture is not just about culture, and the revitalization of language is not just about language – these movements are closely linked with a variety of social, familial, and political goals, and the study of these movements must be undertaken with an awareness of the stakes involved for participating communities (Fishman, 1991; Hinton, 2001; Paulston, 1994; Wright, 2004).

In order to focus more specifically on heritage revitalization projects involving language, such as the New Words Council, it will also be necessary to explore the literature on Language Policy and Planning (LP&P). The next section of this literature review considers language policy and planning from the perspective of the social context in which it is embedded, beginning with a broad overview, and narrowing to

the specific type of grassroots language revitalization of the Kodiak New Words Council.

3.5 Language Policy and Planning

Language policy typically refers to official actions by a government or official body to control or modify the functions of language in society, i.e. in schools, government functions, and media (Cooper, 1989; Haugen, 1959; Wright, 2004). Language policy does not have to be written down, and even if policies are written, actual implementation of such policies may differ from stated policy (Schiffman, 1996). For example, while the Native American Languages Act of 1990 (NALA) contained specific mentions of language rights and commitment to preserving Native American languages, this was largely symbolic (Beaulieu, 2008; Schiffman, 1996). Lack of resource allocation and passage of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001 have halted or reversed many language maintenance efforts in Native American communities with a strong emphasis on English proficiency (Beaulieu, 2008; J. Crawford, 2004; McCarty, 2003; R. Patrick, 2008).

Language policy can be seen as part of a broader process called *language planning*. Language planning activities, following Cooper (1989), are "deliberate efforts to influence the behavior of others with respect to the acquisition, structure, or functional allocation of language codes" (p. 45). Language planning involves implementation of projects and initiatives that attempt to affect changes in language use or allocation. Language planning is deliberate, but there is not always a specific

body guiding the planning. Examples of language activism also fall under language planning, even though they may not have formal leadership. An example is the concurrent efforts by many tribes and individuals to eradicate the word "squaw" from common speech and geographical place names. Activists claim that the word squaw is a bastardization of an Algonquin word for female genitalia, and in English is a synonym for floozy or harlot. This has led to a number of states passing legislation to change place names using the word squaw, including the well-known successful effort in 2003 to change Squaw Peak (also known as Squaw Tit Peak) to Piestewa Peak, to honor Laurie Piestewa, the first Native American woman soldier killed in combat for the United States (Robinson, 2007).

3.5.1 Categories of Language Planning

Cooper (1989) divides language planning into three categories: status planning, corpus planning, and acquisition planning. The three categories are as useful for describing national efforts as they are for local small-scale efforts. Fishman (2006) lists only status and corpus planning, leaving out acquisition planning as a distinct category. It is useful in endangered languages (those threatened by a decline in speakers) to include the category of acquisition planning, as it is directly involves in language revitalization efforts. Hornberger (1998) adds a fourth category to the list, that of orthographic planning, or planning regarding writing systems, particularly for traditionally oral languages. This can be considered a branch of corpus planning. For

the purposes of this study, I recognize four categories: status, corpus, acquisition, and prestige planning, each of which will be discussed below.

Status planning is planning for what contexts a language or dialect should be used in, such as government offices, the marketplace, and schools (Cooper, 1989, p. 32; Fishman, 2006, p. 11). Status planning is not primarily concerned with augmenting the prestige, or perceived social value of a language – as might be assumed by its name – but rather, the domains where that language is spoken. In Northwest Cameroon, a language committee has worked for increased use of the *written* form of the traditionally oral Indigenous language in daily life, including educational, religious and vernacular texts (Trudell, 2006, p. 201). This is status planning in that it seeks to modify the context in which the indigenous language is used in the community.

Corpus planning refers to the creation of new forms (both written and spoken) of a language or the modification of old ones (Fishman, 2006). Examples include standardization of alphabet, spelling or dialect, lexical modernization, or terminology development (Cooper, 1989, p. 31). The work of Hawaiian Lexicon Committee as well as the Kodiak New Words Council are both examples of corpus planning.

While status planning can involve changes in where a language is spoken, *acquisition planning* relates to changing who speaks, reads, or writes a language (Cooper, 1989, p. 33). This typically means teaching the language, or working to increase the natural transmission of the language from parents to children. Language groups who are interested in immersion education in their Native languages often look

to the model of the 'Aha Punana Leo immersion preschools in Hawai'i, which have seen success in developing new speakers since the first opened in the 1980s (B. Wilson & Kamana, 2001). The Kodiak New Words Council can be seen as taking a supporting role to acquisition planning, as a goal of the council is the development of contemporary words for use in future Alutiiq language teaching.

Most language planning projects will not fit nicely into one category, however. The categories often work together, especially when whole programs are involved. Understanding the goals entailed by each category, as well as how the categories often intersect, can present a clearer picture of a language revitalization effort.

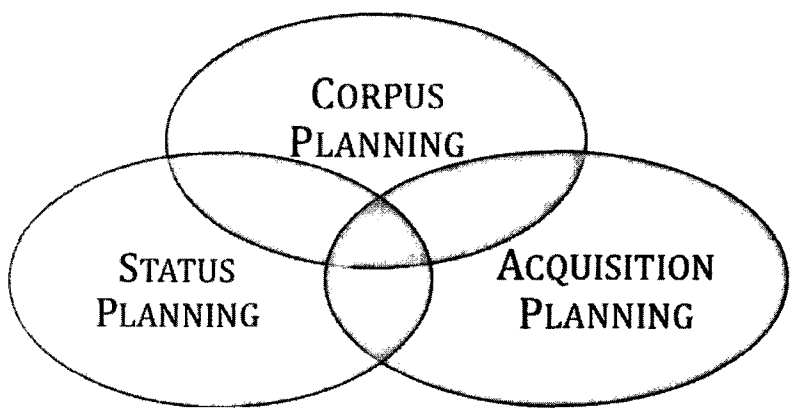

Fig. 3.1 Overlapping Categories of Language Planning

A local language planning effort to open an immersion preschool would likely implement all three types of planning under the broader acquisition planning effort. If the language was not previously used in school settings in that community, its introduction could be considered status planning. While acquisition planning is obvious in relation to the prospective students in the school, it may also apply to the

teachers and administrators of the school, if a group of sufficiently fluent adults is not already available. If age-appropriate classroom materials are not available, corpus planning to determine and develop what is needed in the school may be needed (i.e. children's books in the language, school terminology development, etc.). This may also extend to curriculum development or even writing of classroom songs.

Prestige planning proposed by Baldauf (2006) is a useful addition to Cooper's three categories of language planning. Increasing the prestige of a language, particularly Indigenous languages long subjugated under majority languages, is seen as an important step in reversing language decline, as it increases the perceived value of learning the language, and encourages current speakers to use the language more often (Fishman, 1991). The involvement of Elders in the Kodiak New Words Council can potentially be viewed as prestige planning, as the official nature of the committee, and its restricted membership of only fluent speakers, ascribes a status to speaking Alutiiq that is much reversed from previous decades of language suppression.

3.5.2 Terminological Development

Terminological development, or new words creation, is a type of corpus planning (Cooper, 1989). The development of new words is usually done in order to add vocabulary to a language that lacks appropriate terminology (such as for new technologies), or when the language is perceived as threatened by the adoption of new words from other languages (Fishman, 2006; Warner et al., 2007). Kodiak Alutiiq, like other languages affected by Russian exploration and settlement has a high number

of borrowed Russian words (Counceller & Leer, 2006), but these words are not seen as undesirable, as they have become more fully nativized and integrated into the language. Borrowing from English, however, is seen as less desirable. It is common in Indigenous terminology creation to avoid borrowings from the dominant language (Blair & Fredeen, 1995).

Languages naturally develop new terms on their own, particularly as the need for a new word arises. The American Dialect Society picks the best "new words" found in the English language each year, such as "bailout" (actually the reformulation of existing words) in 2008 and "subprime" in 2007 ("American Dialect Society," 2010). When the pace of change (technological, social, etc.) outstrips a language's natural tendency to create new words, the language ceases to be as viable for use in a modern context. The reduced tendency to naturally develop new words can be caused by a reduction in speakers, or by a decline in the domains (family life, commerce, government operations, community interactions) where the language is spoken (Fishman, 2006).

Efforts to create new words range from established councils with government support, such as the Académie Française in France, and long-running grassroots efforts like the Hawaiian Lexicon Committee in Hawai'i, to ad-hoc, one time projects. Such a one-time effort occurred in the late 1970s in the Central Yup'ik region of Alaska. Reports of difficulties and irregularities in translation of modern terms and concepts into Central Yup'ik motivated the terminological development for medical and legal terms. In one case, mistranslation caused an elderly woman to believe her

suppositories were to be taken orally. Similar misunderstandings occurred in the legal system, creating issues for both defendants and witnesses in court cases (Alexie & Alexie, 2008). The creation of terms to alleviate these problems led to the development of *Mumigcistet Kalikait, "The Translators Book"* (O. Alexie, Barnes, & Dominick, 1990). Although the translator's book was a one-time event, the new words became the basis for the standardization of training for Central Yup'ik translators in clinics, hospitals, and legal courts throughout the region (Alexie & Alexie, 2008).

A more long-term agency sponsored by the French government, the French Académie Française, is an official body charged with developing terms for French. Since the French language is a strong marker of French national identity, the academy seeks to prevent the inclusion of *Anglicisms* (Introduced English words), which symbolize linguistic impurity and a threat to French notions of nationhood (Moïse, 2008; Weinstein, 1976). In recent decades, use of terms from other languages – and use of other languages themselves (such as Arabic, Basque, and Breton) – have increased despite the efforts of the Académie and other governmental policies, and the issue of language in France continues to be a topic of debate (Moïse, 2008; Safran, 1992).

A long-standing group, The Hawaiian Lexicon Committee is most similar to the Kodiak New Words Council in its grassroots structure. The Hawaiian Lexicon Committee was part of the inspiration for Kodiak's efforts and each have hosted visitors from the other's programs. The Hawaiian Lexicon Committee has been in

existence for over twenty years, and has published two large volumes of new terms in Hawaiian (Grenoble & Whaley, 2006, p. 181; Kimura & Counceller, 2009).

While the context of the Académie Française, the Hawaiian Lexicon Committee and the Kodiak New Words Council are very different, all of these committees share a common belief that new words creation through "borrowing" from a dominant language is not desirable. The Hawaiian Lexicon committee lists borrowing from a "non-Polynesian language" among the possible methods for creating words, but this method is listed tenth out of ten recommended ways to make a Hawaiian word (*Māmaka Kaiao*, 2003). Likewise, the Kodiak Alutiiq New Words Council created a list of languages preferred for borrowing, with related dialects of Alutiiq and Central Yup'ik first, and English listed last. This resistance to borrowings from so-called dominant languages, indicates that acceptance of loanwords is perceptually connected to language loss (Blair & Fredeen, 1995).

3.6 Analysis of Language Policy and Planning

Language planning is rarely done "for it's own sake" (Fishman, 1991, p. 19). For example, early in U.S. History, Webster's 1828 dictionary of the "American language" (an example of Corpus Planning) is seen as a strategy to reinforce the United States' independence and difference from Great Britain, while the development of the Academy for the Hebrew Language in 1953 (an organization responsible for continued Corpus Planning) was tied to the recent creation of a Jewish state (Fishman,

2006, p. 12). In a dialogic way, language planning reflects social conditions while attempting to affect those conditions.

The history of language policy in the U.S. illustrates the complexity of studying national language policy over time (Schiffman, 1996). Language policy regarding Native Americans was focused on erasing cultural differences and integrating tribes into the American "melting pot" (Brayboy, 2006). Native language use, just like tribal dress and non-Western religion, were conspicuous differences held by Native communities, which were systematically eradicated through U.S. policies (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002). One need not look far in the literature on endangered languages to find a recounting of the disastrous policies imposed on Native languages in the last Century in the United States (Alton, 1998; Counceller & Leer, 2006; Krauss, 1997; McCarty, 2003; Sims, 2006).

Language was used as a tool in the implementation of other policies against Native Americans and Alaska Natives, and was targeted because it symbolized something that went against national ideologies of nationhood and progress (McCarty, 2003; Romero-Little, McCarty, Warhol, & Zepeda, 2007). Native languages were suppressed in schools, government offices and courts because they represented an undesirable difference in the face of a wider assimilationist national policy (Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002). The assimilation policy against Native Americans and Alaska Natives was influenced by the fact that the survival of these communities and cultures stood in the way of Westward expansion, or 'Manifest Destiny' – a belief

that it was the divine will for the new world to be claimed by European settlers (Brayboy, 2006).

If one looked at language policies in isolation, it would be easy to miss why Indigenous languages are systematically targeted by colonizing states. As Candlin (1991) argues, "There is no sense in which language planning can be undertaken, or its effects evaluated, within some social vacuum" (p. vii). Cooper (1989) asks "Who plans what for whom and how? [emphasis in original]" (p. 31). Tollefson suggests a cultural-historical approach centered on "the origins of constraints on planning, the sources of the costs and benefits of individuals' choices, and the social, political, and economic factors which constrain or impel changes in language structure and language use" (Tollefson, 1991). The above methods aid in understanding Native American language histories, where national ideologies have affected language use at the family level (McCarty, Romero-Little, & Zepeda, 2006; Romero-Little et al., 2007).

3.7 Language Shift and Revitalization

Language revitalization is language planning directed at reversing language shift (Hinton, 2001). It can fall within any or all of the three categories of language planning – corpus, status, or acquisition. Acquisition planning is the most central to the goal of language revitalization, as recovery or stabilization can only occur when you grow new speakers.

Fishman, described as the creator of the "field" of reversing language shift (Bartens, 2001) describes *language shift* as a situation where "intergenerational

continuity is proceeding negatively, with fewer and fewer users (speakers, readers, writers, and even understanders) or uses every generation" (Fishman, 1991, p. 1). The language undergoing language shift is "shifting" to the use of another, usually dominant language such as English. Languages undergoing language shift are said to be "threatened," "moribund," "endangered," "dying," "declining," "obsolescent," or "shrinking," while those who have lost all their speakers are said to be "extinct," "dead," or for those still hoping to revive them, "sleeping" (Fishman, 1991, 2000; Grenoble & Whaley, 2006; Hinton & Hale, 2001; Krauss, 1997). Some of the above terminology is used interchangeably, while certain terms – like *dying* and *dead*–are often avoided by language revitalization proponents (Warner et al., 2007).

While often spoken of in terms of shift, language loss for some Indigenous groups may be more closely described as *language tip*. Language tip (Dorian, 1981) is rapid language shift, often occurring suddenly, after decades or centuries of stability or slower decline. This tip can be uneven across a language family or region, as sociopolitical conditions and pockets of isolation can cause variation in language transmission (Blair & Fredeen, 1995).

This pattern has been evidenced on Kodiak Island, as many families who were bilingual in English and Alutiiq, or trilingual in English, Alutiiq and Russian, became monolingual in English within one generation during the 20th Century. While this tip to English occurred in the present adult child-bearing age generation in some villages such as Old Harbor, it occurred earlier in other areas of the island such as Karluk, where some children grew up speaking only English as early as the 1940s. At the

same time, certain families in the early-tipping villages held on to the language longer, despite the wider large-scale tip to speaking English only.

In some families, older children learned to speak, while younger children became non-speakers or "understanders". Villages closer in proximity to the regional hub of Kodiak city, and those with salmon canneries directly in the village were most likely to have had an earlier language tip (Hegna, 2004). Leisy Wyman found a similar pattern in her study of a Central Yup'ik village at the turn of the 21st century. An "in-between" group of young people had some language skills, while younger siblings were fully English speaking. This tip to English occurred within just a few years, with families having ties to larger hub towns experiencing earlier tip (Wyman, 2004, 2008). In contrast to the Central Yup'ik region, Alutiiq language tip occurred primarily in the early to mid 20th century (Hegna, 2004).

3.8 Grassroots Language Planning and Linguistic Sovereignty

Notions of agency in language planning traditionally lie with government policymakers (Baldauf, 2006). This is now changing with the recognition that success for threatened languages lies with community engagement. Grassroots language planning is sometimes called micro or bottom-up language planning. It is language planning conducted by a small group for itself (Amery, 2001). This is an alternative to top-down efforts by a government or an elite group. Grassroots planning can be conducted by a group as small as a few individuals or as large as a tribe or community.

The lack of significant government support or influence, and participation and control by stakeholders are the primary factors in determining if an effort is "grassroots."

For a small group to have any success in language revitalization, the effort must be grassroots – it must originate from within the community. "...It is recognized that successful initiatives for combating linguistic and cultural marginalization must be grounded in the indigenous community itself" (Trudell, 2006, p. 196). In other words, community organizations, tribes, educators, leaders and Elders must be fully engaged in the process to be successful (Baldauf, 2006; King, 2004; Sims, 2008). This does not mean that successful programs have not originated from above, but when threatened languages are attempting to reverse language shift, the effort needs to come from within.

As mentioned above, language planning is about more than just language. For Baldauf (2006), micro planning is a response, to or resistance to, macro (top-down) policy and an act of self-determination. Micro language planning is about setting the agenda at the local level, and acknowledging the agency of individuals, groups, and organizations, because they exist at the community level where policy and planning are actually implemented.

McCarty agrees that "efforts to revitalize Indigenous languages cannot be divorced from larger struggles for democracy, social justice, and self-determination" (2003, p. 148). Thus, struggles to revitalize threatened languages can be seen as a type of resistance against the hegemony of the dominant culture. This is similar to critical views of language and society (Tollefson, 1991), but places an emphasis on individual

and minority group agency and resistance in the face of larger group power and domination.

Perhaps the answer (if there is one) for language planning communities, is not in international or grassroots efforts alone, but as Smith describes in *Decolonizing Methodologies* (1999), where multiple locally-determined efforts are synchronized on a global scale:

> The movement has developed a shared international language or discourse which enables Indigenous activists to talk to each other across their cultural differences while maintaining and taking their directions from their own communities or nations...(p. 110)

Smith continues that the strength from this international Indigenous movement (which is about land, cultural *and* language rights) is strengthened and renewed at the local level, where struggles and resistance have existed for generations.

3.9 Conclusions

Language revitalization shares many characteristics with the broader movements of heritage revitalization as well as other forms of language planning, in that their overt goals often mask more complex motivations (Clifford, 2004; Fishman, 2006). In the case of top-down language planning by dominant society, these motivations often have to do with reinforcement of broader policies against minority groups, such as acculturation of Native American tribes by the United States (Brayboy, 2006; Schiffman, 1996). In the case of grassroots efforts, such as language

revitalization among Native American groups, the motivations can be related to a full range of sociopolitical issues, such as healing, land rights, nationalism, ethnic pride, political self-determination and restitution (Clifford, 2004; Cooper, 1989; Fishman, 1991; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002; D. Patrick, 2007; Romero-Little, 2006; Wright, 2004).

An understanding of the complexity of language policy, language planning, language revitalization, and heritage revitalization can be beneficial to tribes and communities as they seek to stabilize or revitalize their languages. Research on language planning should take into account the connections or disconnect between local planning and national policy, the multiple agendas and conflicting goals at play within language movements, and an awareness of micro and macro, local, national, and global perspectives in which language planning efforts can be examined (Alton, 1998; Tollefson, 1991; Wright, 2004).

The Kodiak New Words Council is a grassroots, terminological development project, which is a type of corpus planning within language planning. At the same time, it is a project of language revitalization within heritage revitalization. Research on local language revitalization efforts such as terminological development should not overlook the effort's role within concurrent heritage revitalization efforts because while language planning research can identify that other social factors are at play, heritage revitalization analysis can reveal what those factors are by contextualizing the effort within larger goals of the Native community. These goals may include justice,

healing, sovereignty, self-determination, self-education, and community perpetuation (Brayboy, 2006; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002; Romero-Little, 2006; Sims, 2006).

Chapter 4:

Indigenous Action Research

4.1 Introduction

Indigenous Action Research (IAR) is the methodological framework for this research. Action Research (AR) emphasizes participant and researcher collaboration and shared control, as well as enacting positive change (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000). While inspiring change in a research context was once unheard of (Hammersly, 2004), working toward such change is a principle of both Action Research and many Indigenous research orientations (Herr & Anderson, 2005; L. Smith, 1999; S. Wilson, 2008). Given this inherent compatibility, and given my belief that research projects in Indigenous communities should consider Indigenous epistemologies (knowledge systems) and Indigenous theories of research (L. Smith, 1999), I suggest a formulation of AR called Indigenous Action Research (IAR), that incorporates core principles of AR (positive change and participant agency) while also being informed by Indigenous epistemologies and theories of research.

In this chapter, I will first address some of the complexities inherent in the use of the term Indigenous. The very definition of *Indigenous* – which some have described as essentialist – requires a significant explanation, as this chapter relies on an acknowledgement of some common characteristics and experiences among the many different Indigenous cultures worldwide (McCarty, Borgoiakova, Gilmore, Lomawaima, & Romero-Little, 2005). Second, I will examine what is meant by Indigenous epistemologies, providing some of the key characteristics outlined by

Indigenous scholars around the world. This will be followed by a formulation of IAR that acknowledges commonalities and differences with AR as a Western research methodology. I will explore the issues of representation, survivance, and rhetorical sovereignty that are connected with research projects such as this one in Native communities. This chapter also discusses integration of Indigenous and Western theories of research as done in this study (see Section 4.5).

4.2 *Caqiq Indigenous*? (What is Indigenous?)

It is difficult to even speak about things that are "Indigenous" without raising concerns about dualisms, monolithic categories, and essentialism. Essentialism as referred to here, is defining a group through a few descriptions of certain essential characteristics, i.e. "Natives are prone to alcoholism" or "Indigenous peoples have a strong connection to the land" (L. Smith, 1999, p. 74). Grande (2000) has characterized mainstream essentialist discourse about American Indians as "a romantic narrative of noble savages and stoic maidens" (p. 350). Such essentialist renderings reflect a disturbing history that perpetuates the objectification (as mascots and symbols of nature) and misrepresentation (as violent, unintelligent, or stoic) of Indigenous peoples.

Erasing stereotypes that encourage harm to Indigenous groups is of great benefit, yet the academic movement to deconstruct essentialist portrayals has been met with anger from many Indigenous intellectuals. A passage from Womack (2000) shows how anti-essentialism is perceived by one Native American scholar:

> I never even encountered the word "essentialist" before coming to grad school, and then it was thrown at me like a dirty word, mostly because I wrote something about Native writers and the land in a paper...The same professor who labeled me "essentialist" said there was no truth, no history, just lots of peoples viewpoints...If everybody's story is all of a sudden all equally true, then there is no guilt, no accountability, no need to change anything, no need for reparations, no arguments for sovereign nation status, and their positions of power are maintained (pp. 3-4).

Grande makes a similar point, that the "relativizing effects of postmodernism obscure the slow dissolution of Native rights" (2000, p. 351). In other words, if there is no larger group membership (as Native American or Indigenous), then colonial history is simply a decontextualized series of actions by individuals toward each other – with no larger responsibility or understanding. In short, deconstructing essentialist categories without providing an alternative erases the commonalities and connections between, and similar historical experiences faced by, Indigenous peoples.

The persistent use of essentialist descriptions of Indigenous people *by* Indigenous people has led some scholars to formulate the concept of "strategic essentialism," or essentialism used to further a political agenda or specific effort (Hale, 2006; Jaffe, 2007; D. Patrick, 2007). In some cases, such "strategic" uses of essentialist discourse may be seen as a necessary aspect of survival. In other cases, the common threads between Indigenous groups may be genuinely felt by communities. Focusing only on the "strategic" implications of essentializing discourse overlooks

real commonalities and casts all uses of such discourse as part of a contrived plan (Hale, 2006, p. 114). For many Indigenous people, one's cultural identity, ties to the land, and reverence for their Native language are too serious to be disregarded as a simple political "strategy."

The definition of *Indigenous* in this chapter follows Wilson (2008) who refers to "the people and peoples who identify their ancestry with the original inhabitants...of countries worldwide" (S. Wilson, 2008, p. 34). Most of these Indigenous groups are now subsumed within larger nations, as minority populations without full sovereignty. Indigenous groups typically share a history of colonization by larger nations, which may be continuous today (Brayboy & Maughan, 2008).

When I speak of *Indigenous* theories or epistemologies, I use them in an inclusive, yet not monolithic sense (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 1999b). With the hundreds or thousands of Indigenous groups around the world, one cannot assume there is a single Indigenous viewpoint, theoretical perspective, knowledge system, or research methodology, even when common threads are apparent. While using the term Indigenous to describe epistemological or theoretical characteristics, it should be assumed I refer to characteristics held by many or some, not all. The qualities discussed here "represent tendencies rather than fixed traits," and it should also be noted that these systems are constantly changing and adapting in today's world (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005). Since Indigenous theory could potentially cover numerous disciplines, I limit my discussion to those elements of theory I feel are

relevant for outlining an Indigenous Action Research methodology for use in Indigenous communities.

I use the term Indigenous with a capital I to differentiate from the "small i" used in reference to plants and animals. This is now common in the literature among Indigenous scholars, but still worth noting, as it is not yet universal. I use this term interchangeably with Native (also capitalized), or terms accepted in specific areas that fall under discussion (such as First Nations in Canada).

One might assume that anything discussed as an Indigenous characteristic herein automatically dis-includes Western or other cultural groups from sharing that characteristic. This is absolutely not the case. As many scholars have pointed out (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005; Brayboy & Maughan, 2008; Marker, 2004), there are some significant overlaps (as well as contradictions) between what are called Western epistemology, science, or research, and those of Indigenous groups. Barnhardt & Kawagley (2005) outline some of the common and different characteristics between Native knowledge systems and Western science. Examples of the overlap in data collection methods include, "pattern recognition, verification through repetition, and inference and prediction" (p. 16). They offer that an integration of Western and Indigenous methods into a "comprehensive holistic system" can better serve students. As I will discuss below, an integration of Indigenous and Western concepts for research also provides a more holistic and useful model than reliance on only one.

4.3 Indigenous Epistemologies

Epistemology is the study of the nature of thinking or knowing. It derives from the Greek word *episteme*, which means *knowledge* (Brayboy & Maughan, 2008). Some have discussed epistemology in terms of the "knowledge system" of a culture or group (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005). The terms knowledge system, ways of knowing, or traditional knowledge are often used in place of the term epistemology. The study of epistemology tries to discover how a culture defines knowledge, how it is gained or theorized, and what is "worth knowing" (Brayboy & Maughan, 2008, p. 2; Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2001).

Indigenous peoples often talk of a "living knowledge," one that is primarily shared orally through daily interaction rather than through a written record. This is especially true in cultures with an oral, non-written language that requires interpersonal interaction for learning to take place. The living quality of knowledge reinforces the importance of Elders in Indigenous communities, who are "repositories of cultural and philosophical knowledge" (Medicine, 2001, p. 73). Knowledge passed from generation to generation is naturally changing, never static; it builds from the lived experiences of people and is therefore specific to the place where it is situated (Brayboy & Maughan, 2008; Cochran, 2004). An epistemology based on human-held knowledge, such as among the Kwara'ae in the Solomon Islands, does not separate the "knower from the known," and therefore rejects concepts of objectivity (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2001). Such an emphasis on subjective knowledge has also been

noted in other Indigenous epistemologies (Brayboy & Maughan, 2008; Cochran, 2004; Parker Webster & John, 2008; S. Wilson, 2008).

The environment and the land heavily influence Indigenous knowledge systems. For example, in Kodiak Alutiiq, where awareness is influenced by the island environment, there are numerous words to describe a person or animal's place on the land or sea, with different words and grammatical forms indicating a location uphill (away from the ocean), or downhill (towards the ocean) the distance inside a bay, and whether the subject is moving, stationary, or in a general or exact location. Communicating such information is important for hunting, fishing, traveling and ultimately, survival in the often-harsh stormy environment of the Gulf of Alaska.

An epistemology informed by environmental experience gives authority to active observation, adaptability, and resourcefulness (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005; Pálsson, 1994). A connection to the land (that is, one's ancestral land, not land in general) is one of the most commonly shared pan-Indigenous qualities[11] (Brayboy, 2006; Marker, 2004; Oritz, 1981; S. Wilson, 2008). An epistemology rooted strongly in a specific place may not be considered "generalizable" in a Western academic sense, but this is a natural aspect of site-specific knowledge (Brayboy & Maughan, 2008).

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[11] The land connection has drawn scholarly critique, because it potentially alienates displaced Indigenous populations and urban-dwelling Natives (D. Patrick, 2007). The perspective of this researcher is that for those who continue to identify as Indigenous, the power of place, even for urban dwellers, remains a strong influence.

Many Indigenous epistemologies place an emphasis on holistic integration of knowledge as opposed to categorization and classification. The complex connections between humans and the environment, animals and plants, art, science, and spirituality figure strongly in Indigenous understandings of the world. According to Cochran (2004), "a researcher cannot separate out any one aspect of Native knowledge (e.g. traditional ecological knowledge) to the exclusion of any other without misinterpreting it as Natives see and understand it" (p. 4). It is not just the fact that things are connected that is important in Indigenous knowledge systems; it is "relationships between things, rather than things themselves" which are important (S. Wilson, 2008, p. 74). This interconnectedness of Indigenous knowledge is shared with the holistic emphasis in Activity Theory – the analytical framework chosen for this study – as discussed in Chapter 6. Activity Theory denies categorization, and like many Indigenous epistemologies, focuses attention on the workings of the whole to gain understanding.

Shawn Wilson sees the holistic nature of Indigenous epistemologies extending not just from parts of systems within a discipline, but to a connection between science, art, people, and religion. To look at any one of these things in isolation provides an incomplete understanding. As knowledge and religion are usually held apart in academia, an acknowledgement of direct connections in Indigenous epistemologies may be surprising or discomforting (Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2001; Marker, 2004). Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo (2001) note spiritual aspects of Kwara'ae epistemology that include knowledge gained from psychic dreams and connections to ancestors. While a

strong connection to the knowledge of ancestors is important in Alutiiq epistemology, many contemporary Alutiiq families are also Christian. Christian values and ancestor reverence are not exclusive in the Alutiiq knowledge system.

Perhaps because of the interconectivity of Indigenous knowledge systems, there is an awareness of humans' place in larger systems. This interconnectivity results in an emphasis on rules and responsibilities related to knowledge. These responsibilities relate to human effects on the natural world as well as on each other (Brayboy & Maughan, 2008; Cochran, 2004; Marker, 2004). For instance, the knowledge of where to pick *alagnat* (salmonberries) in traditional Alutiiq culture also comes with a responsibility to share that food with others, particularly the sick and elderly, as well as to leave enough for future gathering. This sense of responsibility in knowledge is a primary value of Indigenous Action Research as described in the next section, which requires knowledge gained through research to be relevant to community needs and guided by community participants.

Responsibility for knowledge is related to a concern in Indigenous communities for community survival (Brayboy & Maughan, 2008). In the past, this survival was in terms of physical survival, health and well-being. Today, survival has shifted meaning, at least in part, to mean resistance against assimilation in order to perpetuate community and cultural survival. This perspective on survival has been called *survivance* by Vizenor (1994a), and refers to the strategies used by communities to resist, adapt and accommodate in order to survive in difficult times (Powell, 2002; Vizenor, 1994b, 2009). The importance of survivance and community survival are

integrated into Indigenous epistemologies and form a core tenet of Indigenous research methodologies (Brayboy, 2006).

4.4 Indigenous and Action Research

An Indigenous theory of research must be informed by Indigenous knowledge systems and cultural values (Barnhardt, 2009; Brayboy, 2000; Cochran, 2004; Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2001), and share a concern for the historical and contemporary injustices experienced by Indigenous peoples. In response to historical injustice, an Indigenous research methodology should emphasize responsibility and survival as described in the previous section. Such a theory should work to decolonize research methodologies (Brayboy, 2006; Grande, 2000; L. Smith, 1999), and affirm the Native community's place at the table of discussions about Indigenous culture and experience (Lyons, 2000; S. Wilson, 2008).

The methodology that I have developed for this study is called Indigenous Action Research (IAR). It incorporates the qualities I have described as necessary for an Indigenous Theory of research integrated with Action Research (AR) – a research methodology that encourages change through research, and prioritizes participant agency. As I demonstrate below, AR has potential relevance to Indigenous methods, and may be modified to become more applicable in an Indigenous community research context. This section will describe IAR methods, explore epistemological differences between AR and Indigenous research theories, and propose the integration of AR and Indigenous research theories through IAR.

Action Research (AR), also known as Participatory Action Research, breaks down the traditional distance between researcher and "subject." Its three defining characteristics according to Kemmis & McTaggart (2000) include: "shared ownership of research projects, community-based analysis of social problems, and an orientation toward community action." Because of its emphasis on community action and justice, as well as its inherent flexibility and inclusiveness, AR is complimentary to (but not an exact match with) Indigenous research. Brayboy & Maughan say that AR "is rooted in notions of reciprocity and in a sense of community survival against threats of marginalization" (2008, p. 27). This emphasis on community survival, i.e., survivance, is key to the IAR methodology.

Herr and Anderson (2005) state that AR "shifts the locus of control in varying degrees from professional or academic researchers to those who have traditionally been called 'subjects' of research" (Herr & Anderson 2005, p. 2). They also describe Action Research as reflexive, collaborative, and oriented towards improving practice or other positive change. Park (2001) discusses the central role that non-experts play in action research, and how the process can be emancipatory for marginalized groups (p. 81). Such efforts to improve conditions for communities are aligned with the goals of Indigenous research theories, but the agents of emancipation should be Indigenous groups themselves.

While complementary in many aspects, AR is based on a different epistemological basis than Indigenous research theories. These concerns must be addressed before AR can become IAR. The first epistemological concern for AR is in

the center of agency over research. Many forms of AR involve an outside researcher engaging a community after a research topic or focus has already been established (Dyrness, 2008; Henry-Stone, 2008). This contrasts with the desire for full community agency in Indigenous research. The desire is not just to be "emancipated," but rather, to have local control over research agendas. Many Indigenous communities work with outside facilitators, experts, and organizational representatives, and these relationships should continue, with the level of control, participation, or oversight determined by the Indigenous community itself (Marlow & Counceller, 2008). The local control of research agendas should be integrated into an Indigenous form of AR.

Another area of potential concern is the inherent democratization principle in AR. Park (2001) describes AR as "allied to the ideals of democracy." The problem with democracy for Indigenous peoples, especially Native Americans, is the "melting pot," assimilationist undertone. Grande (2000) reminds us of "Indigenous peoples' historical battles to resist absorption into the 'democratic imaginary' and their contemporary struggles to retain tribal sovereignty" (p. 468). By instead allying itself to principles of sovereignty and self-determination, IAR is made much more relevant to Indigenous communities.

4.4.1 Basics of Indigenous Action Research

This section describes some of the characteristics shared between all forms of Action Research (AR), and explores methodological differences caused by Indigenous

Action Research's foundations in Indigenous epistemologies and focus on Indigenous social issues. Indigenous Action Research (IAR) and AR are complementary in many ways, but are not entirely equivalent. IAR shares with Action Research (AR) a desire to influence positive change, and an emphasis on participant agency, but has a stronger emphasis on community control over research agendas (Marlow & Counceller, 2008).

AR involves a spiraling, iterative research process, a concern over the roles of researcher and researched, and a clear desire that the subjects of research have a role in the entire research process. IAR, however, goes further than many forms of AR in prioritizing the research goals of Indigenous communities over researcher-initiated projects. The IAR process, like other forms of AR, is not linear, but rather involves a repeating "spiral" of research including: plan, act, observe & reflect (Herr & Anderson, 2005, p. 5).

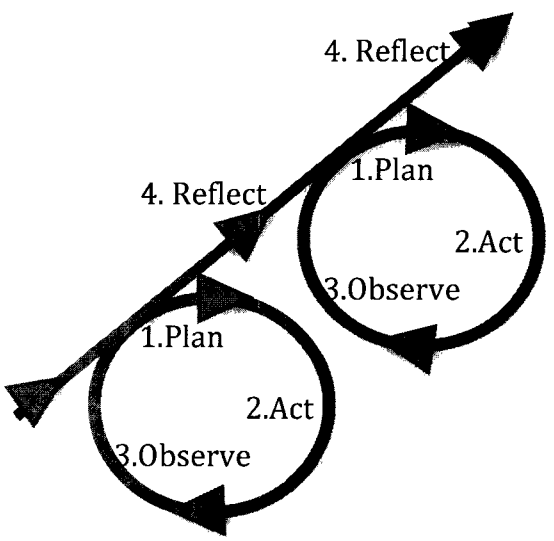

Fig. 4.1 Spiral of Action Research

The "spiral of research" is useful in that it reconfigures the concept of research from a linear project with a beginning, middle, and end into an ongoing process that builds upon itself for improvement of both process and project outcome. This spiraling, cyclical nature of the AR process is found in many Indigenous epistemologies, where time is non-linear and there is no clear beginning or end. While most AR projects such as this one do eventually come to a conclusion, they could conceivably continue on indefinitely.

The first stage of an AR spiral involves planning for a change. This plan is then enacted, and the researchers observe and evaluate the processes and consequences of that action (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000). This is followed by reflection on the process and the outcomes of the action, followed by additional planning, acting, and observing, etc. (Herr & Anderson, 2005; Kemmis & McTaggert, 2000, p. 595). IAR projects involve participants at all stages in the research spiral from planning to write-up, not just as collaborators in the planning. This recursive, building progression of research is relevant in Indigenous epistemologies that are comprised of living knowledge, adapted, informed and developed by experience.

AR is not an easy choice for researchers due to the competing goals imbedded in the process. "The double burden…is the concern with both action (improvement of practice, social change, and the like) and research (creating valid knowledge about practice)" (Herr & Anderson, 2005, p.5). The academy typically frowns on making any sort of change in the outcome of a research context, but AR requires that this be

done out of the inherent belief that a researcher's responsibility is also to help improve conditions for the community. In this way, AR practitioners feel a similar pull as Indigenous researchers do between western expectations and Indigenous epistemological motivations. Whether from an Indigenous or non-Indigenous background, any IAR researcher would experience a tension over their commitment to both knowledge and change, or the academy and the community. This can only be ameliorated through a clear acknowledgement and discussion of these tensions, as done in Section 5.5 of this study.

According to Herr & Anderson (2005), AR occurs on a continuum of positionality ranging from Level 1, where research is both initiated and conducted by insiders, to level 6 where outside researchers initiate and control most aspects of the research. While a number of the positions on the continuum (below) can result in positive research models for Indigenous communities, the lower numbers that afford greater self-determination over research are more closely aligned with Indigenous theories of research.

Table 4.1 Continuum of Positionality in Action Research. Adapted from Herr & Anderson (2005), p. 31

Continuum of Positionality in Action Research					
1 ***← Insider***	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6** ***Outsider →***
Insider (researcher studies own self/practice)	Insider in collaboration with other insiders	Insider(s) in collaboration with outsider(s)	Reciprocal Collaboration (insider-outsider teams)	Outsider(s) in collaboration with insider(s)	Outsider(s) studies insider(s)

The positionalities in Table 4.1 which are most appropriate to an IAR project are 1-4 as all to varying degrees are controlled by the insider (subject) community. Positionalities 5 and 6, which are more oriented to outsider research objectives, would be more appropriate to other types of AR.

Positionality can change at different times within an AR project. A researcher is sometimes more of an outsider or insider depending on the context. A location on the continuum of positionality is never fixed (Herr & Anderson, 2005). While overall, a research project such as this one may fall at a certain location, e.g. Number 2, "Insider in collaboration with other insiders," certain phases of the research may fall under different categories. For example, while the implementation and analysis of this research was conducted in collaboration with other participants, the idea of studying the New Words Council as an AR project came from discussions between myself (the insider researcher) in consultation with mentors from the university, likely Number 4, "Reciprocal Collaboration (insider-outsider teams)." Some parts of the analysis required me to examine my own roles and responsibilities within the New Words Council, which is similar to Number 1, "Insider (researcher studies own self/practice)." As Henry-Stone (2008) describes, an examination of positionality in an AR project is beneficial to ensure "a balance between [researcher] interests and those of...collaborators" (p. 94). In IAR, a priority – rather than a balance – is desired for the interests of the community.

Issues surrounding individual positionality during AR projects are most evident in the researcher. Herr and Anderson (2005) discuss the issues a researcher may face as they simultaneously occupy different positions as insider and outsider:

> ...each of us as researchers occupies multiple positions that intersect and may bring us into conflicting allegiances within our research sites. We may occupy positions where we are included as insiders while simultaneously, in some dimensions, we identify as outsiders (p. 44).

As an insider researcher conducting IAR, I have experienced moments of being "outsider-ed" when conducting the research. This happened when asking Elders to complete informed consent forms, and at the start of the interview process, when I was forced to interact with them in a researcher role, rather than as a learner or Museum staff member. The careful navigation required of my numerous roles is discussed further in Section 5.5. It is a continual learning process when implementing IAR in Indigenous communities.

4.4.2 Research, Self-representation, and Sovereignty

The struggle over authority to speak for and about Native peoples is played out on the contested ground of representation – specifically, who has the right to speak with authority about a people (Friedman, 1992). Indigenous Action Research (IAR), is an important potential tool in the ongoing struggle for communities to be heard in academic and public discussions about them. Through the publication and presentation of IAR research, researchers and Native communities can begin to

deconstruct the issues of representation and authority that have long worked against the interests of communities participating in academic research.

Briggs has called the right held for decades by academics as *discursive authority* – authority over the discourse about a cultural group (Briggs, 1996). In the past, academic perspectives were given more authority than Indigenous peoples' own understandings (Friedman, 1992; Lyons, 2000; L. Smith, 1999; P. Smith, 1983; Writer, 2008). The struggle for authority over representation can be addressed through an application of research methodologies like Indigenous Action Research, which emphasizes control not only over the design and implementation of research, but in the write-up as well.

The struggle for community control over Indigenous representations is tied to the issue of sovereignty. *Sovereignty* is "the right of a people to conduct its own affairs, in its own place, in its own way" (Lyons, 2000, p. 450). It is the right of a group to remain distinct, and to perpetuate itself, even when subsumed within a larger state intent on assimilation. It is "the guiding story in our pursuit of self-determination, the general strategy by which we aim to best recover our losses from the ravages of colonization: our lands, our languages, our cultures, our self-respect" (Lyons, 2000, p. 449). Because of the unique political history between Native American/Alaska Native tribes and the federal government, an understanding of sovereignty is central to discussions about research ad representation in Native communities (Lomawaima, 2000).

According to Deloria (1970, p. 123), sovereignty is not something that can be handed to Native groups by the government. Rather, sovereignty "must be [first] asserted and then recognized" (Lyons, 2000, p. 457). It must come from within a group, but depends also on acknowledgement by others. This is the complicated thing about sovereignty: although it cannot be given, it must be recognized when asserted, in order for it to exist. Thus, it is by nature dialogic. Although sovereignty has been asserted throughout tribal histories with the U.S. federal government, its recognition has often been limited (Brayboy, 2006; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002; Lyons, 2000).

The representation of the New Words Council in this study is tied to a branch of sovereignty called *rhetorical sovereignty.* Rhetorical sovereignty, according to Lyons (2000), is sovereignty over a group's representations. It is the assertion of the right to self-representation, a claiming of authority over the written word to use as a means for pursuing Indigenous objectives. It is similar to *semiotic sovereignty*, as defined by Crawford (2000) which is "the right to present accounts of one's past and have them taken seriously by others" (S. Crawford, 2000; Lührmann, 2004). Rhetorical sovereignty is having a voice among the many putting forth information about your culture or community. It is an assertion that insider interpretations be afforded respect and legitimacy by the academy. Recognition of the right to rhetorical sovereignty is central to its success.

The concept of rhetorical sovereignty has its roots in the work of the Native American civil rights movement. These social changes of the 1960s and 70s led to an emphasis on greater tribal self-determination, and increased attention to Indigenous

intellectual traditions and literature (Deloria, 1970; Deloria & Lytle, 1984; D. Warrior, 2007). Lyons' coining of rhetorical sovereignty is very much in the vein of other Native American scholars, who blurred the lines between literary analysis, cultural critique, and self-determination politics (Vizenor, 1994b; R. Warrior, 1994). For Lyons, rhetorical sovereignty deals directly with the "colonized scene of writing" as a key "contact zone" in the ongoing struggle for self-determination (p. 453).

For the Alutiiq people, research and representation of Native American/Alaska Native communities and their heritage revitalization is another "contact zone" in the struggle for tribal self-determination. The heritage movement for Alutiiq communities was a turning point in reclaiming the right to define ourselves. As Pullar (1992) states, "Alutiiq peoples have long allowed others to define who they are and how they should act. This power that has been relinquished must be reclaimed for pride in heritage and ethnic identity to be instilled" (p. 189). Indigenous Acton Research provides a means through which the previously relinquished power of rhetorical sovereignty can be reclaimed, and the authority over Alutiiq representation can include Alutiiq voices.

Where research in the past was implicated as a method of colonial domination (L. Smith, 1999), rhetorical sovereignty provides a frame for interpreting the ongoing struggles for Native voices within research and academic representations. Rhetorical sovereignty provides both a lens through which to understand these struggles, and a common goal for Native communities and their partners in the continuing process to decolonize research. This is why this research project and its Indigenous Action Research methodology has focused on the values, benefits, and opinions of the

community members participating in the New Words Council – to give voice and agency to tribal members conducting and collaborating in the activity and the research.

4.5 Indigenous Research: Separatist or Inclusive?

Recent attention to Indigenous methodologies is a response to the profound lack of respect accorded to Indigenous knowledge systems and research methods in the past (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 1999b; L. Smith, 1999). It is why Indigenous scholars always must explain themselves in ways that would not be needed if they were researching under a Western paradigm. As Wilson (2008) recalls of the experiences of fellow Indigenous Ph.D. Students:

> These scholars, who had done such great work, were heavily criticized for their research methodologies by the dominant system academics on their panels. Both had attempted to use methods that were reflective of the Indigenous communities where they were working. Each had to spend much of their time in an effort in the re-writing of their theses in justifying their Indigenous-based research methodologies through mainstream theoretical arguments (p.30).

Some Indigenous scholars have argued that allying Indigenous methods with Western methods like Action Research (AR) is a double-edged sword (S. Wilson, 2008). Because of the inherent power difference within academia between Western and alternative methodologies, there is a danger of the dominant paradigm still being favored, or that Indigenous contributions will be treated as a multicultural "side dish" rather than being seen as a full-fledged methodology on their own.

Wilson (2008) feels that there should be a purely Indigenous paradigm, and that the need to find a corollary in Western theory simply reflects a dominant system privileging its own methods. Instead, he recommends that complimentary methods be seen as that and nothing more:

> While Indigenous research may look to relational psychology or PAR [Participatory Action Research] for support, this support is not for external validation, but rather a complimentary framework for accepting the uniqueness of an Indigenous research paradigm (S. Wilson, p. 16).

Wilson is correct that the Indigenous research paradigm is unique, particularly because it is based on Indigenous epistemologies – something that cannot be substituted in even the most open Western system. But this is not a call to create a "separate but equal" system for Indigenous scholars. It is not a characteristic of Indigenous epistemologies to look at knowledge in isolation. Therefore, I believe an Indigenous theory of research cannot abandon the contributions of other cultures or epistemologies, including Western ones.

The holistic and non-static nature of Indigenous knowledge systems means that they are always in a state of change as new knowledge is gathered (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 2005). One misconception perpetuated through the use of the term "traditional knowledge" is that it is static and closed to new influences, which is exactly opposite from the truth, according to Patricia Cochran (2004). Indigenous knowledge, she says, values resourcefulness, and incorporates knowledge from all experiences and all cultures, so that, "together, these two sources of knowledge,

traditional and nontraditional, articulate to produce a frame of understanding and validation that give meaning to the world around them" (p. 6).

Indigenous research should be acknowledged as a unique category, based on its epistemological foundations outside of established models. However, when Indigenous epistemologies and Western epistemologies are thrust together, as in academia, there must be a way for them to work together while still maintaining an understanding of the unique characteristics held by each. A complex, dialogic relationship is sorely needed, for Indigenous peoples are in need of allies within the academic order, and must utilize all available tools in order to achieve the goal of community survival inherent in Indigenous research.

According to Barnhardt & Kawagley (1999a, 2005) the emerging science of Chaos and complexity is now shedding light on Indigenous epistemologies, that have long understood complex systems, such as weather, seasons, or ocean currents. "The Western thought-world has begun to focus more attention on relationships," they report, "as its proponents recognize the interconnectedness in all elements of the world around us" (Barnhardt & Kawagley, 1999a, p. 2). They expand the concept of complexity theory to describe the integration of Indigenous knowledge systems and Western formal education systems. While earlier educational models in Alaska included at first a dual (separate) system, the model proposed by the Alaska Rural Systemic Initiative includes systemic integration.

I propose that complexity theory can also be applied to the integration of Indigenous epistemologies and research theories with AR to create IAR. This

integration allows both Indigenous and action research to be utilized without an expectation to choose one over the other. There is not an expectation that they be fully melded together. It acknowledges the similarities and differences between the two knowledge systems and makes free use of what is useful from each.

Other Indigenous scholars have proposed such integration, in terms of using all available tools for a desired outcome. In his discussion of academic knowledge and cultural knowledge, Brayboy argues, "these forms of knowledge need not be in conflict. In fact, transformational resistance calls for knowledge learned in school to be used in conjunction with tribal knowledge towards community based social justice ends" (Brayboy, 2005, p. 196). Cochran (2004) predicts that the two knowledge bases of Indigenous and scientific knowledge will "continue to be in contact" as practitioners seek to find the most successful means of understanding the world (p. 4).

4.6 Conclusion

In the methodology outlined in this chapter, Indigenous theories of research and Western Action Research (AR) methods are integrated in a newly-developed methodology to create the best method of understanding the Kodiak Alutiiq New Words Council. This Indigenous Action Research (IAR) project integrates the principles of decolonization of research, survivance, and self-determination in research, seeking to return rhetorical sovereignty to the Alutiiq community. It is informed by Indigenous epistemologies that conceive of knowledge as holistic, changing, and informed by experience. This study also utilizes core tenets of AR,

which are the agency and involvement of participants, and the goal of influencing positive change.

Chapter 5:

Methodology

5.1 Introduction

The data collection methods used in this project were chosen based on how best to answer the research questions, what data was already freely available (like New Words Council meeting recordings) and what methods were most appropriate in an Indigenous Action Research project informed by Indigenous epistemologies and research theory. To that end, data such as interviews, talking circle, participant feedback, and meeting recordings were chosen, as they allowed participants to speak for themselves and contribute towards the analysis.

5.2 Data Collection Techniques

This section outlines the actual techniques employed in this research. I employed multiple data collection techniques, including interviews, a talking circle[12], field notes of New Words Council meetings, material artifacts from meetings (agendas, meeting notes), active participation, a research journal, and participant feedback. In addition, as a lifelong community member and seven-year staff member of the Alutiiq Museum language program, I have background experience and access to existing relationships and resources that aided greatly in the research process.

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[12] A talking circle is an activity frequent in Alaska Native and other Indigenous gatherings used to discuss topics of interest to the group. It is similar to a discussion group, with an emphasis on every participant being given the opportunity to speak if they wish.

Over the course of an 18-month data collection period, from January 2008 through June 2009, I conducted semi-structured interviews with 15 members of the Kodiak New Words Council. I transcribed each interview, and provided a transcript to the participant for approval or modification. A talking circle was held in August, 2009. This talking circle was a semi-structured group discussion with discussion questions. The talking circle was audio taped. The recording was used to make field notes of the meeting, and sections of the discussion were transcribed. Participants were shown the quotes (either from interviews or the talking circle) used in the write up to see how their information was being used in context, and given the opportunity to withdraw any quotes if desired.

New Words Council meetings were recorded by the Alutiiq Museum as an activity of the National Science Foundation grant project funding the formation of the New Words Council, under a separate institutional review and participant consent process (See Chapter 2 for a description of the project). These recordings were available to this research project through the museum's on-site research request process. Although I had access to the recordings as the museum's Language Manager and co-Principal Investigator of the grant project, I applied for research approval, as the recordings were being used for an additional purpose. Since recordings were being made throughout the three-year project, it was necessary to select a time-frame to limit the amount of handled data to a manageable level. I chose all of 2008 for the sample period, as this time frame coincided with the first 12 months of the research period. Eight meeting recordings were available for this period. As each meeting was

about two hours long, I created field notes of the meetings using a 20-minute alternating algorhythm (notes created during the first, third and fifth 20 minutes, or the second, fourth, and sixth 20-minute segments of video). This method was used to limit the amount of data while ensuring coverage of different meetings and different sections of agendas. In addition to the field notes for the meetings, meeting artifacts such as meeting minutes, notes, and the publicly-available master word list, were used to cross check data from the other sources.

Throughout the research process, I kept a research journal. Because I was an active participant in New Words Council meetings, I was unable to take field notes during meetings, so the journal allowed me to reflect on events and interactions after they occurred. The journal was used to write reflection notes about New Words Council meetings, thoughts and preliminary analysis about interviews and other data as it was being collected. It also was a place to brainstorm and formulate ideas about the analysis of data, as described in the following section.

Background knowledge on Alutiiq culture and communities from lifelong residency on Kodiak Island was beneficial in the research process. Having already worked in Alutiiq language revitalization at the Alutiiq Museum since 2002 was also helpful, as I had formed relationships with all participants in the study prior to initiation of research. This allowed me to focus more on the research, without having to form new relationships or spend additional time figuring out how things work within the community.

This project used multiple techniques to gather data in order to enhance the validity of the research. Using both interviews and meeting recordings, for example, enabled me to compare what people say about the New Words Council with what actually occurs in meetings. Use of meeting minutes and notes helped to verify the dates and sections of meetings where certain words were discussed, if that information was not easily accessible in recordings or the research journal. Most importantly, the use of these multiple techniques, in addition to my active participation and background knowledge, allowed the participants more than one way to contribute to the research and provide insights to help answer the research questions. The key to this project, and any Indigenous Action Research project, are the participants themselves.

5.3 Analytical Methodology

I began my data analysis without a specific analytical framework, although I found that two theories – Grounded Theory and Activity Theory were relevant to my analysis. I began by conducting a close read of interview transcripts, taking notes on common topics, issues, and themes that arose. From these notes, I then developed a list of codes. Coding, a shorthand method of flagging sections and quotes within a text sample, was used to isolate thematic concepts such as the connection between language and identity, and the positive benefits of participation described by New Words Council members in their interviews.

I later determined that the methods I was using to identify themes, and more importantly, the principles behind the methods, were closely aligned with

Constructivist Grounded Theory. Grounded Theory is a methodological orientation that emphasizes that theory must come from research data itself – that no preconceived notions of the results should affect the data collection or analysis. Constructivist Grounded Theory is a branch of Grounded Theory that emphasizes the situated, context-specific quality of individual experience and the resulting research findings. It denies an objective truth or grand narrative, focusing instead on the realities experienced by participants and the knowledge that is co-created between researchers and participants (Charmaz, 2000, 2008).

After the close read and initial coding, interview data were entered into a Macintosh-based text analysis software program called TAMS (Text Analysis Management Software) to aid in organization. Computer software for analysis of qualitative research falls into a number of categories, ranging from intricate coding systems designed to identify correlation between samples, to more general text management and retrieval (Morison & Moir, 1998). All in some way are intended to make the often large amount of data inherent to qualitative research more manageable (Dohan & Sanchez-Jankowski, 1998; Morison & Moir, 1998). Because of the way many of these programs work, they are often associated with Grounded Theory analysis methods (Bell, 2005). Some researchers have expressed concern that such systems allow researchers to rely too heavily on technology without a full grasp of their chosen analytical methodology or a sincere engagement with the data, which is core to methods like Grounded Theory (Charmaz, 2008). Others have worried that computer-based methods may lean more towards generating statistical information,

which "either misses important sociological causes of social action or emphasizes explanation (the hallmark of logical positivism) at the expense of understanding" (Dohan & Sanchez-Jankowski, 1998, p. 478).

The TAMS computer software used in this study allowed me to apply codes to the transcripted data. This is done by highlighting sections of an interview and then clicking on a code from the list developed during my close read, then outputting those coded sections into separate text documents. For example, all text samples where participants discussed the connection between speaking Alutiiq and their Native identity were compiled into a single document, where I was able to easily see the common themes and opinions people discussed. The software was not used to find correlations between themes, although that is possible with the TAMS software. The software was primarily used to separate out identified themes into their own documents.

Field notes from New Words Council meetings were coded by hand, providing cross check and supporting information to the interview themes. This information was also used as comparative data to the interviews. I looked for actual meeting events to support or complicate what participants said in interviews about their experiences in meetings. For example, while learners reported that Elders were the only formal members of the council, meeting recordings showed that learners and Elders both held important, active functions in meetings, and that Elders specifically asked learners for their opinions on certain topics. Other archival sources of data such as a research journal, meeting agendas, and meeting notes were used to provide supporting

information to what was said about meetings in interviews. The archival sources were also used for reference information, such as what words were discussed in what meetings, or when discussions occurred that I recalled in my research journal.

Ultimately two theoretical frameworks, Activity Theory and Constructivist Grounded Theory, were used in a complementary way to maximize the relevance of the research. Activity Theory provides a formal mechanism for analyzing activity holistically, by identifying its many interconnected components while in process (not "frozen in time") (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). Activity Theory seemed to be relevant to the study from the very first close read of interviews, while Constructivist Grounded Theory allowed me to expand beyond the boundaries of traditional Activity Theory with thematic analysis of additional important issues to the research participants.

There were a number of themes that related to my research questions, and broadly were aligned with the transformative qualities important in Activity Theory, but were also going beyond the scope of typical Activity Theory analysis. These themes included, 1) emergent benefits of the New Words Council expressed by participants, and 2) community-specific measures of success of the New Words Council.

In order to be compatible with the Indigenous Action Research I outlined in the previous chapter, the method of analysis for my data needed to prioritize the experiences, goals, and understandings of participants; be compatible with Indigenous epistemologies and goals for social justice; and accommodate a changing, non-static research context. As flexible philosophies rather than prescriptive "recipes" for data

analysis, Constructivist Grounded Theory and Activity Theory meet these requirements. Both of these analytical frameworks are described more fully in the following chapter.

5.4 Inclusion, Identification, and Protection of Participants

This section discusses the demographic make up of the New Words Council, and provides an explanation of how participants are identified individually in this research. I have worked with participants to ensure that all quotes are used in the way they intended when they were interviewed or quoted in a meeting. It was left up to the individual participant if they would like to be identified by initials or anonymously in any or all of their contributions.

The members of the Kodiak Alutiiq New Words Council range in age from their early 20s to 60s for learners, and early 60s to late 70s for fluent speakers, with occasional participants or guests falling outside of these age ranges. The majority of participants reside in Kodiak city, but some also call in from the villages of Port Lions, Old Harbor, or Larsen Bay, or attend meetings in Kodiak when they are in town. The Elder participants who reside in Kodiak city are all originally from outlying villages, including Ouzinkie, Karluk, Akhiok, Old Harbor, and the now-abandoned villages of Kaguyak and Afognak. Learners on the council represent various tribal and village memberships, with many having spent most or all of their lives in the city of Kodiak, and others retaining residence in their home village. Thus, the council is broadly representative of the Kodiak Alutiiq population. Gender representation on the council

is relatively even, sometimes with a slightly higher participation level among female speakers. Among learners, the gender difference is more pronounced, with the majority being female. As participation varies monthly, exact numbers are unavailable, but the February 2009 meeting had 10 fluent speakers, four of whom were male, as well as five learners, all female. A few meetings have had more male than female fluent speakers participate, but there has not been a meeting with more than two male learners present.

All of the fluent speakers who participate are considered Elders, though occasional Elders participate who are semi-fluent or non-speakers, including one active learner[13]. The learner participants have varying levels of partial and semi-fluency, but are generally able to follow discussions about words and suffixes with the help of other participants. All of the participants have known each other for years or decades, through family and social connections, as well as through cultural, tribal, and Native corporation activities.

Participants' impressions, opinions and understandings are important in the research. All quotes were reviewed by participants before inclusion to ensure my interpretations were aligned with the intended message of the speaker. Claims made in the analysis were reviewed by participants individually or in small groups to verify that my understandings were reasonable to others involved. All participants were

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[13] The term *Elder* in Alutiiq culture is not determined by reaching a certain age, but by the level of experience, respect, and knowledge they are considered to have in the community. Due to the long history of language loss on Kodiak, there are many Elders who do not speak Alutiiq.

given a final opportunity to restrict their information or remove it from the dissertation before publication.

Throughout the write up of the dissertation, full names have only been used if discussed in a historical context, such as in mentioning the names of individuals involved in the early years of language revitalization. Any quotes from participants are commonly identified with initials, and whether that individual is a learner or Elder (i.e., 'SM, Learner'). This allows participants to identify themselves in the write up and feel that they are being acknowledged for their contributions to the research, while also protecting their identity from individuals outside of the community. After reviewing their quotes, participants were given the option to be identified anonymously (i.e., 'E2, Elder') rather than with initials if they felt they did not want their initials associated with one or more of their quotes. None chose this option, although three participants are identified in this manner, as they submitted consent documentation for the Museum's project, but not specifically for this study.

When a participant mentions or addresses another person by name in a quote, that person is identified by their initials if they are another participant (and approved of the use of their initials), or '[NAME]' if the person mentioned did not complete an informed consent form. Staff including myself are listed with initials, followed by learner/staff (i.e. 'PB, learner/staff'). Since staff of the program strongly identify as learners, 'learner' is specifically listed before 'staff'.

5.5 Researcher Positionality

As a learner, staff member, researcher, co-PI, and community member, my self-identification within this research is complicated. As mentioned in Section 4.4.1, positionality within an Action Research project is always changing, but the issue of roles is dramatically increased in this research project because of the tensions between community and academic requirements, differences in status definitions between community and academy, and social rules and expectations within Alutiiq culture.

In no way do I wish to obfuscate the fact that I play multiple roles and that some of those roles involve complex and shifting power and status relationships with other participants. These roles involve both Western and Alutiiq responsibilities, statuses and expectations, and they often come into conflict with each other. My role as a researcher is complex. Researchers have traditionally held a level of power higher than that of community members. My role as the co-Principal Investigator of the National Science Foundation-funded project supporting the New Words Council also puts me at a higher status level from a Western point of view. In addition, my position as the Alutiiq Language Manager at the Alutiiq Museum means that I am technically the supervisor and employer of the New Words Council participants, as the Elders receive a modest stipend for their participation.

These positions of power are sometimes in direct conflict with my other roles in the New Words Council – that of learner, young person and community member. In Alutiiq culture, Elders have the highest status in the community, and act as leaders and mentors to the younger generations. Thus, the Alutiiq cultural role of Elder and

the Institutional role of Language Manager and researcher create tension, as both are positions of power and responsibility as seen from different cultural perspectives. At all times during the research I have been keenly aware of these mismatches in status, and have tried to approach the situation from the Alutiiq cultural roles as much as possible.

In terms of age, I am of a similar age to the grandchildren or younger children of the Elders on the New Words Council. Thus, in cultural terms, I hold a lower status in relation to the Elders. This fact causes me to have to be very careful and respectful as I strive to fulfill my researcher and job responsibilities so as not to break cultural rules of respect. Most importantly, myself, other learners, and staff members must never directly contradict what an Elder says, or call their knowledge or fluency into question. It would be unheard of for a person in my position to boss an Elder around or treat them like another staff member or employee. Alexie, Alexie, and Marlow (2009) explored a very similar situation in the Yup'ik Language Proficiency Program, in which the university roles of teacher, student, and participant contradicted cultural roles of Elder and adult, requiring careful navigation and constant negotiation of the conflicting roles and norms of university and Central Yup'ik culture.

My role as a learner similarly requires a level of respectful interaction with the Elders on the New Words Council, which some people unfamiliar with the culture would find confusing. A museum employee who did not grow up in Kodiak once asked another person why I treat the Elders with "kid gloves." Shortly thereafter the staff member directly asked an Elder to move her seat so that she could have a better

camera position to film an event. While the Elder graciously moved to a different seat, I was shocked and embarrassed by the cross-cultural blunder that had just taken place. As a young person and community member, I would have chosen a camera position that did not interfere with the Elders' experience of the event, even if it resulted in a lower quality image.

Despite the apparent status distinctions that come with my Western roles, these status levels do not always translate into the community context. While these roles do not disappear and must have some bearing on the work done in the New Words Council, the Elders treat me, and I identify myself, as a learner and young person. This of course creates tensions, because even if the power and status does not translate, the requirements of funding sources, research, and employment still exist. Therefore I must constantly negotiate between the requirements of my different positionalities, and if a choice must be made, I choose the positionalities closest to my identity – Alutiiq person, community member, young person, and learner.

I strongly self-identify as a learner and participant while interacting with Elders and other participants on the New Words Council, and have chosen to self-identify this way in the dissertation. Any quotes from myself used in the write-up are written as, '(AC, learner/staff)'. It should be clearly understood that in addition to being a learner and staff member, I am also the researcher, and a tribal member of the Alutiiq community – but I cannot identify with all positions simultaneously. Thus, it must be remembered that my responsibilities go beyond those of a learner or staff member in this research project.

The complexity of positionalities, status, and insider-outsider roles encountered in this research project, have required me to be continually aware of these issues throughout the project. Such awareness is an important responsibility for any researcher, with tensions as well as rewards. As Herr & Anderson (2005) assert:

> In making explicit the tensions we experience as researchers in our varying roles and statuses, we have the possibility of crafting uniquely complex understandings of the research question (p. 44).

It is my hope that the numerous tensions and roles I experience also provide a unique perspective and insight into the research topic, which will aid in producing a study of value to both the academy and the Alutiiq community.

Chapter 6:

Analytical Frameworks – Activity Theory and Constructivist Grounded Theory

6.1 Introduction

The New Words Council is made up of fluent speakers and language learners of different ages, life experiences, from different villages and with different tribal memberships. They come together monthly in a meeting room and via video or audio conference, surrounded by agendas, dictionaries, notebooks, computers and projectors. This activity is carried out in the context of a larger grant funded project awarded to the Alutiiq Museum by the National Science Foundation. The grant project itself is part of a broader community strategy of Alutiiq language and cultural revitalization, conducted by individuals, tribes, and organizations on the Kodiak Archipelago.

It is useful in this context to utilize an analytical framework to conceptualize and organize the large amount of information about the New Words Council. Analytical frameworks provide a window through which to look at research data. This window serves to frame certain things, while also limiting the field of view to a more manageable field of data. Some analytical frameworks, like Activity Theory discussed here, are also used as methodological frameworks (Yamagata-Lynch & Haudenschild, 2009; Yamagata-Lynch & Smaldino, 2007). I have chosen not to use a "view limiting" framework during data collection, but rather to allow the broad data gathered to suggest what framework might be most appropriate in the analysis.

After preliminary analysis of compiled data from interviews and New Words Council meetings, I determined that Activity Theory (AT) and Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT) were appropriate tools for organizing the data. Frameworks such as Activity Theory can act as a "defamiliarizing technology" to facilitate the identification of characteristics often overlooked in habitual activity, and subsequently enact innovations to improve the process (Thorne, 2004, p. 53).

6.1.1 Roles of Activity Theory and Constructivist Grounded Theory

Activity Theory (AT) is the primary framework for organizing information for this research project, complemented and extended through Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT). AT can illustrate the dynamics of new words creation and the relationships between participants, the tools and objects they use to conduct their work, and the connections between individuals and organizations that comprise the wider language movement. Because of its acceptance of activity-specific definitions of success, and a focus on development over time, AT fosters innovation and transformation through identification of obstacles, goals and outcomes.

I expand on the construct of transformation in AT by using CGT to explore themes arising from the data. The formal goal of the Kodiak NWC is to create new terms for the Alutiiq language in an effort to make the language more viable. Analysis of the NWC focusing only on the formal goal might measure success in terms of the number and quality of new words created. However, the data clearly suggested a more complex array of goals, as well as related benefits and measures of success.

Analysis of these emergent qualities using CGT allows thematic analysis to determine findings gleaned from data (Seaman, 2008).

AT and CGT are compatible with Indigenous Action Research, the methodology for this study, as well as Indigenous epistemologies and Indigenous research theory. Indigenous Action Research and AT share a focus on change and positive transformation. This emphasis is congruent with the goals of many Indigenous communities seeking positive transformation for their communities. Additionally, the epistemological emphasis on holism that informs Indigenous Action Research is a key principle in AT (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). AT and many Indigenous epistemologies deny categorization and deconstructive analysis, in favor of understanding complex systems as greater than the sum of their parts (McMurtry, 2006).

CGT is significant in its ability to extend AT's transformation construct through thematic analysis of participant-identified priorities. Additionally, CGTs focus on prioritizing participant voices allows the study to fulfill an Indigenous Action Research goal of fostering a community's authority over its own representations. Additionally, like Indigenous Action Research, CGT focuses attention on the relationship between researchers and participants, clarifying the important role participants have in the research, and preventing researchers from claiming an objective stance in the write-up (Charmaz, 2008).

I have found no examples of Activity Theory in the literature on language endangerment and revitalization analysis. However, a similar, transformative, goal-

oriented analysis is provided by Christine Sims. In a keynote presentation at the 2008 Sustaining Endangered Languages Symposium (SILS), Sims analyzed the roles and contributions of various participants in a language revitalization effort, along with their frustrations and relationships on the road to language revitalization through the use of an "Indian Car" metaphor (Sims, 2008). The car represents the language movement, the passengers represent the community members, Elders and learners, and while not a luxurious vehicle, the passengers pull together to reach their destination.

While Sims did not use AT or other pre-defined academic framework to discuss the Elders, learners, and teachers, their goals, and obstacles, to a student of AT, the potential connection was clear. Instead of an activity triangle heuristic (See Section 6.2), she used an equivalent culturally-relevant metaphor that many other Native Americans in the audience could identify with. It was clear that although she could have used an activity system triangle or a similar analytical tool, her choice of the Indian car was engaging, inspiring, and a conscious reminder of the strategic methods used by Indigenous scholars to make their research and analysis relevant to their communities.

While this research project does make use of the formal activity systems triangle and other principles of Activity Theory to organize findings, additional tools are offered in the analysis in order to present information in a meaningful way for participants and other community members affected by this study. In addition to providing culturally-relevant metaphors of participant relationships and the wider language movement (See Sections 7.5 and 9.6), I expand on the construct of

transformation in AT by exploring themes arising from the data. This thematic analysis uses Constructivist Grounded Theory to allow the data to speak for itself (Seaman, 2008). See Section 6.5 for further explanation of the use of CGT to support thematic analysis.

6.2 Basics of Activity Theory

Activity theory (AT), sometimes referred to as Cultural-Historical Activity Theory (McMurtry, 2006; Thorne, 2004) is described as, "a philosophical and cross-disciplinary framework for studying different kinds of human practices as development processes, with both individual and social levels interlinked at the same time" (Kutti, 1995, p. 25; Thorne, 2004). It is a framework for understanding human activity on an individual and collective level by examining the interconnected components of activity. AT conceptualizes the components of activity systems without breaking them down into separate categories. It emphasizes the whole, rather than the parts, and stresses history, progression, transformation and change rather than a "stuck in time" snapshot of a situation (Engeström, 1999; McMurtry, 2006). AT is the study of contextualized activity, taking place between individuals and groups, and affected by the environment, objects, social rules and norms. It provides a means for understanding interacting components of situations, while avoiding the pitfalls of "disciplinary fragmentation" and "reductionism" (Wertsch, 1985). Unlike other frameworks, which have been used to examine human agency separately from societal structures, AT considers them interlinked (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006).

Activity as used here, refers to work, trade, or vocation – human activity directed towards a goal, concrete or otherwise (Thorne, 2004). Activity in AT is more than "busy work" or a classroom "activity" that gets students engaged – such behavior would be defined as a *task* in AT, and may make up a larger activity. An *activity system* refers to the interconnected components of an activity: the subject(s), the object or objective, the intended outcome, as well as the instruments or meditational means (tools and signs), community, rules and division of labor (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). These components, which are never examined in isolation, are often depicted in an "activity triangle" to aid analysis (see Fig. 6.1, below).

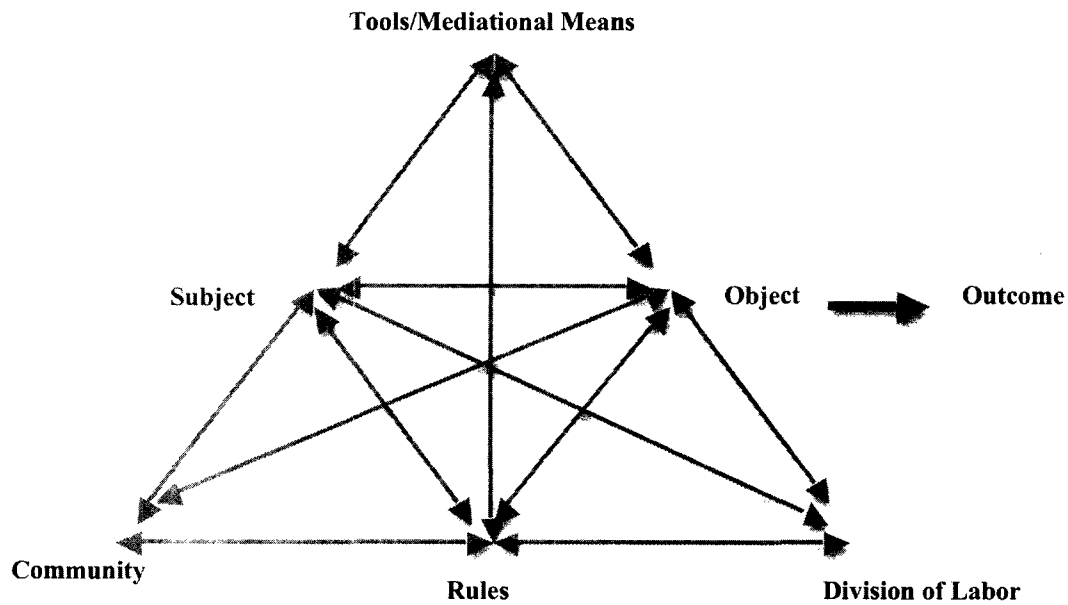

Fig. 6.1 Activity Theory Triangle

The *subject* is the individual or individuals who are conducting or participating in the activity, and from whose perspective the activity is being analyzed (Mappin, Kelly, Skaalid, & Bratt, 1999). The *object* is the thing they are acting on, or the target of their activity – a shared object is the primary component that distinguishes one activity from the matrix of other activities occurring in society (Basharina, 2007; Kutti, 1995). The *outcome* is the desired result, or overarching goal of the activity. The subject(s) achieve their objective and outcome through the use of instruments or *meditating tools* (Thorne, 2004). These can be physical (such as technology, books, or resources) or intangible (such as socially-developed signs, previous knowledge on a subject, intellectual tools such as internal speech, or the words and language used for communication) (Basharina, 2007; Roth & Lee, 2007; Wells, 2007). The *community* is made up of other individuals and groups that share a similar object or goal, such as professional colleagues, members of a speech community, or collaborating organizations (Thorne, 2004; Yamagata-Lynch & Smaldino, 2007).

The division of labor in the activity triangle, is not so much to categorize tasks according to different participants, but to understand how participants' tasks relate to other parts of the system in accomplishing the object, as well as what rules and norms affect their practice. Division of labor can be analyzed horizontally – describing who does what, as well as vertically – revealing differences in power or status among participants (Engeström, 1999; Thorne, 2004). All of these interconnected and dialogical components are affected by *rules*: social norms, and conscious or unconscious rules for behavior and interaction (Engeström, 1999; Thorne, 2004;

Yamagata-Lynch & Haudenschild, 2009). The analysis for this study will explore the various components of the New Words Council "activity triangle" as well as the interactions between participants and the rules and meditational means they use to accomplish their object.

One drawback of the activity triangle depiction of activity systems, is that although AT focuses its analysis on the interactions between different aspects of the system, the visual representation of the triangle appears to support categorization. However, an analysis that simply identifies the various components is incomplete – contradicting one of the primary tenets of AT – that of irreducibility. As Roth and Lee explain (2007), if scholars "isolate tools as a separate analytic entity in the triangle heuristic, they face the threat of misinterpreting their data, because they do not attend to the different functional relations between the subject, tool, and object" (p. 202). It is relatively simple to identify components (e.g., tools, division of labor) in an activity system, but what is important for AT is how the subject uses those components, and with what success in achieving the goal of the activity.

It is also important not to get sidetracked by the static appearance of the triangle, as "Activity Theory does not consider activities as 'given' or static entities, but dynamic ones: activities are always changing and developing," reminds Kutti (1995, p. 28). Engeström adds, "Human activity is endlessly multifaceted, mobile, and rich in variations" (Engeström, 1999, p. 20). This research will reinforce the irreducibility and process-orientation of the New Words Council by focusing on

interactions and relationships between participants, and the process towards the goal, rather than seemingly-static elements and characteristics.

6.3 History of Activity Theory

Activity Theory (AT) evolved from the writings of German philosophers such as Kant and Hegel, and the socioeconomic and anthropological writings of Marx and Engels (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Thorne, 2004). Russian psychologist Lev Semenovich Vygotsky (1896-1924) who applied the theories of these earlier writings to the development of the mind, is seen by many as the grandfather of activity theory. Vygotsky's early death due to tuberculosis left much for later theorists such as Leont'ev, Luria, and Engeström to elaborate (Bedny & Karwowski, 2004; Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Wertsch, 1985). Vygotsky's primary contributions were in postulating a dialogical relationship between the mind and society, and asserting that learning is accomplished through collaboration between individuals. He expanded on Engels' and Marx's theories regarding tools and instruments mediating labor, to develop the idea that psychological tools (also called instruments or artifacts) mediate thought (Mappin et al., 1999; Miettinen, 2001; Thorne, 2005). Vygotsky believed that the mind does not develop in isolation, but transforms throughout a person's life history through experiences and interactions with others (Cole, John-Steiner, Scribner, & Souberman, 1978). Vygotsky's description of the mind in society has been called Sociocultural Theory, and the study of activity that stems from it is known as Activity Theory (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). The sociocultural emphasis on person-to-person

learning and development is relevant to this study in the interactions between learners and Elders on the New Words Council, as well as to the Alutiiq way of learning, which was traditionally conducted experientially between individuals.

Vygotsky felt the study of the human mind and its development through learning must incorporate both biological and social factors (Wertsch, 1985). He theorized that the appropriate unit of study for understanding the formation of the mind was human activity (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). Vygotsky's first models of activity were comprised of the subject, their object, and the meditational means used to accomplish the object (Engeström, 1999; Thorne, 2004). The meditational means can be physical (e.g., a calculator for solving mathematical equations) or mental (e.g., a rhyme or other method used to aid memory). These three components, Subject, object, and tools/meditational means, form the 1st generation AT triangle (see Figure 6.2, below).

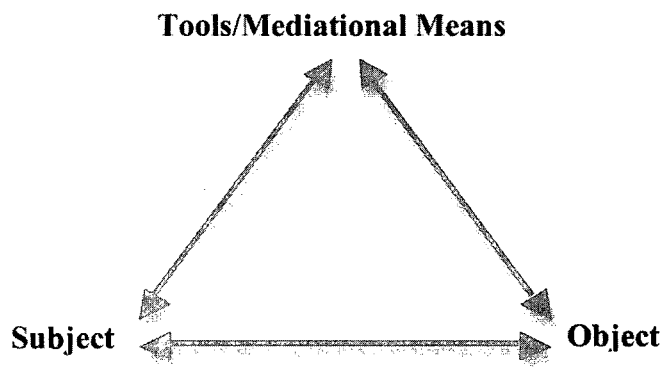

Fig. 6.2 Early (1st Generation) Activity System Triangle

Building on Vygotsky's cultural-historical model, Leont'ev, a student of Vygotsky, and other 2nd generation Activity Theorists suggested the addition of "critical societal dynamics" such as interactions between multiple subjects participating in the same activity (Thorne, 2004). The expanded AT triangle (shown previously in Figure 6.1) is the depiction of activity most common to 2nd generation AT, and incorporates rules, community, and division of labor. These changes facilitated analysis of subject-oriented activity – activity that occurs between individuals rather than in isolation. Leont'ev's work increased the emphasis on activity over mediation, and for the first time, the term *Activity Theory* began to be used (Thorne, 2005).

Engeström is the best-known contributor to the development of 3rd generation AT, although he was also central to AT's 2nd generation. Third generation AT focuses on interactions between multiple activity systems and explores obstacles and power in affecting processes (Engeström, 1999; Roth & Lee, 2007). Engeström recommends an analysis of contradictions (i.e. obstacles or impediments) as both an obstruction and an opportunity for innovation within activity systems (Engeström, 1999). The issue of contradictions will be discussed further in Section 6.4.2 of this chapter.

Knotworking, introduced by Engeström, Engeström, and Vähääho (1999) is a concept that focuses on the complex matrices within and between activity systems and individuals. Using knot metaphors to illustrate the "constantly changing" connections that untie and retie in different configurations, this concept is intended to conceptualize an individual or activity system's movement across time and space,

grasping the complexities of large activity systems in the 21st Century (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p. 225). While this study acknowledges and describes the complexity of the sociohistorical matrix in which the Kodiak New Words Council is situated, an in-depth analysis utilizing the concept of knotworking is beyond the scope of this research.

In studies of the complex matrix of activity systems, it is common within today's 3rd generation AT to explore the differences in power that occur within and amongst participants (Engeström, 1999; Roth & Lee, 2007). For example, the students in an Alutiiq language class may all be thought to have equal levels of power, but some students may be acknowledged as having more previous Alutiiq language knowledge than others, some may be more comfortable learning in an institutional setting, and others may be Elders, an important status in Alutiiq culture. While all students are said to be equal, some may be treated differently by their peers or the instructor. The division of labor in an activity triangle in 3rd generation AT, will often describe horizontal planes of interaction between subjects, as well as vertical divisions of power and status (Thorne, 2004).

The issue of status is significant in this study of the Kodiak New Words Council, where participants have high levels of agency, but long-standing roles and relationships (e.g., between researcher and participant, or institutional representative and community member) have the potential to persist. Additionally, cultural roles of Elders/teachers and younger generations/learners can complicate the status landscape. The issue of roles and status are also discussed in the methodology, Section 5.5 and in

the analysis, Section 8.6.5. It is through explorations like this that a holistic picture of the New Words Council's internal dynamics will begin to emerge.

6.4 Key Components of Activity Theory used in this Study

This study draws largely on 2nd generation AT. I look at the interactions of various components within the New Words Council. I explore the complex matrix of other activity systems at play in the community and wider society without going as far as knotworking analysis, as discussed above. I also draw on 3rd generation AT. I explore issues of justice and agency, and I focus on the contradictions and resulting innovations that contribute to the success of the New Words Council.

AT is a large framework with great potential for analysis of goal-oriented group activity. Certain concepts within AT are more germane to the Kodiak New Words Council than others. The two overarching themes of AT chosen for this study include the holistic analysis of activity systems, and the transformative nature of activity. Aspects of the analysis will closely follow these AT concepts, while other parts of the analysis will be extended with themes in the research findings, using Constructivist Grounded Theory to guide the use of thematic analysis.

6.4.1 Holism

Activity Theory stresses a holistic examination of human activity. It identifies various components, participants, rules, and factors affecting an activity system, but does not end the analysis with simple description. The goal is to understand how all of

the components interact within the activity system, and in recent forms of AT, with other activity systems as well. While identifying the many actors, factors at play within an activity system combine to form a whole 'greater than the sum of its parts.' As McMurtry (2006) summarizes, "concrete totalities are irreducible to their parts, since those very parts derive much of their importance from their place in the whole" (p. 211). Because one cannot focus on components, theorists beginning with Vygotsky decided that the unit of analysis should be activity itself.

Within activity, there is also a holism of individuals, their activity and the environment (Bedny & Karwowski, 2004). While individuals make up an activity system, and over time develop the rules, norms and cultural practices they experience, they must be understood not only as individual agents, but as being embedded in and affected by the "social matrix" of the system (Engeström, 1999; McMurtry, 2006). Understanding and visualizing the complex matrix that an activity is situated in is a difficult task. One of Engeström's most heralded contributions to 3rd generation AT is *knotworking*, which attempts to conceptualize the multitude of activity systems interacting within a societal matrix. Activity systems connected to each other through the temporary sharing of goals or objects, are connected by knots, which are ever-changing, tying and retying as activity systems change (Engeström; Roth & Lee, 2007). While an acceptance of the complex community matrix in which the New Words Council is situated is a central assumption of my research, a journey into the new and complicated theory of knotworking goes beyond the scope of this research project.

Holism will be an integral concept in the analysis chapter of this study, as interviews, group discussion, and New Words Council recordings will provide information about division of labor, interactions and relationships between participants, and how the New Words Council fits in to the language movement and heritage revitalization on Kodiak. Holism will illuminate how the New Words Council and the individuals that comprise it affect their task and shape their own activity in achieving community goals.

6.4.2 Transformation

"...We don't really understand something unless we are able to transform it" (Thorne, 2004).

Activity Theory (AT) is based on an understanding that activity is in a constant state of change, or transformation. An AT research project takes place over time in order to observe processes. It acknowledges the history of the activity system before initiation of the research. This history is responsible for many of the present conditions, and the signs, rules, and communities at play in a given activity system.

AT seeks to understand how an activity came to be, its processes of transformation, and how we might effect transformative change. As Basharina (2007) describes, "In order to understand...how a tool works, one has to study its use over time allowing for usage to develop" (p. 87). To understand how the New Words Council works, research must allow time for the activity to develop, as well as acknowledge the history occurring before the activity or research project.

One of the key processes involved in transformation is mediation. Mediation is the use of physical or intellectual tools to conduct activity (Cole et al., 1978). In AT, individuals do not act directly on, or respond directly to the world; all action is mediated with culturally-specific tools (McMurtry, 2006). Therefore, individuals and their tools exist in an "irreducible tension," as no interaction or activity can occur without mediation (Nasir & Hand, 2006, p. 465). This is not a small concept within AT. According to Angstrom, the concept of mediation is the unifying theme shared by the major AT theorists since Vygotsky (Engeström, 1999).

There are two types of mediation in Activity Theory. Tools (also known as instruments or artifacts) can be material (physical) or symbolic (intellectual or intangible) (Basharina, 2007; Thorne, 2004). All action and experience are mediated by tools (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; McMurtry, 2006). This means that, for example, if a person sees a *taquka'aq* ("bear"), their reaction is not to the *taquka'aq* itself, but is mediated by one's previous knowledge of, and past experiences with *taquka'aq*s, as well as culturally-specific symbols of the *taquka'aq*. This is mediation in its simplest form, but it shows how central the concept of mediation is to human experience in Activity Theory.

The concept of mediation may be easier to understand through examples of activity, because it is directed at a goal, or object. For example, a carpenter constructs a home with material tools such as a hammer and saw, and is mediated by mental tools like knowledge of building codes and past building experience. A teacher may use an intangible tool such as a rhyme to aid in teaching students a scientific concept, while

her students use a physical tool such as a reference chart to aid in learning. Some have discussed language or discourse itself as a mediating tool, as it is employed in activity to aid in accomplishing a common object (Roth & Lee, 2007; Wells, 2007).

In the Alutiiq New Words Council, Elders and learners use a variety of material and symbolic tools. These include physical tools such as computers and other technologies, printed books and agendas, and writing implements. Symbolic tools might include the Alutiiq and English languages, literacy in those languages, rules of conduct, and mental strategies used to aid memory. These mediating tools used in the New Words Council will be elaborated in Chapter 7.

As mediation is a component of the activity systems triangle, it could be examined within a holistic analysis. However, in this study, it will be considered as part of the transformation theme, as it is inexorably linked to the progress towards the goal of an activity. Nasir and Hand (2006) describe the transforming character of mediating tools, saying that they, "carry meaning across time in that they are derived from a cultural past, are projected into a cultural future, and are used to structure activity in the present" (p. 466).

It is important to examine mediation in the context of an activity like terminology development, because identification of successful and unsuccessful mediation can aid in the success of the process. For example, a mediating tool used in terminology development might be the use of an Indigenous language to communicate. If that language is used exclusively, and some members of the council are not fluent in that language, then its use to mediate may be unsuccessful, despite the

social reasons for choosing that language to conduct the activity. In the same context, if more than one mediating language is used for conducting business, the meditational qualities of both languages may be more successful in achieving the object.

Successful mediation is linked to the process of internalization, and its reciprocal opposite, externalization. Through the social process of internalization, a person converts experience into understanding (Kutti, 1995). It is a "transformative and reciprocal process whereby the person transforms what is internalized and through externalization potentially impacts the self and community" (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006, p. 158). An example of internalization and externalization is the learned art form of wood carving. In wood carving, after an artist sufficiently internalizes the techniques taught to them by mentors, he or she may create some new carving methods of their own, and ultimately change the art form itself. Future carvers may learn these new methods as part of the traditional form, and may themselves develop innovations to transform the genre.

In AT, individuals are both influenced by and modify their own social realities, but not through a simple Cartesian stimulus-response (Roth & Lee, 2007). Instead, the internal and external worlds are united in a dialogic relationship through the processes of internalization and externalization. Externalization, where individuals and groups shape their own world, is key in the transformative process. It is the process by which individuals and groups actively make decisions about shaping their world, and act. When an activity is mastered, as will be seen with the New Words Council, individuals are freed to explore their agency and make decisions about the activity

they are conducting. For example, after Elders became accustomed to the new process of creating words for the Alutiiq language, some questioned what may be considered "traditional methods" and suggested innovative word creation techniques, like combining the first half of an English word and the second half of a nativized[14] English word (e.g. *umtusaikalaq* – "motorcycle," created from the root *umtu-* "loud" and the ending of "bicycle," with an Alutiiq spelling and ending). This mastery and then rethinking of the techniques of new words creation is an example of externalization.

Transformative change is not a seamless process. AT does not overlook the internal contradictions, heterogeneity, and other complications or potential impediments to transformation. Impediments, or contradictions as they are called in AT, are factors which interfere with the subjects achieving the goal of the activity. They occur between components of the activity systems triangle, such as between the subjects and the division of labor, or the mediating tools and the objective. According to Thorne (2004), "All activity systems are heterogeneous and multi-voiced and may include conflict and resistance as readily as cooperation and collaboration" (p. 58). Impediments are not seen as purely negative, however. Contradiction and conflict are sources of possible innovation, and should be addressed in a change-seeking process (Engeström, 1999). As Kutti describes, "Activity Theory sees contradictions as

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[14] The term "nativized" is a linguistic term referring to the process whereby a word from another language is pronounced in the sound system of the adopting language. In Kodiak, it is common to refer to this process in the Alutiiq language as "Alutiicization," and the resulting terms as "Alutiicized." See the discussion of Alutiicization in section 7.6.2.

sources of development; real activities are practically always in the process of working through some of such contradictions" (Kutti, 1995, p. 28).

A contradiction that occurred in the New Words Council was in the use of an internet-based videoconference system to communicate with members in rural sites (a mediating tool for communication). Because of bandwidth limitations, connections were poor and untrustworthy, leading to frustration and a difficulty in communication with the Elders in the rural site. The innovation was actually a return to a simpler but more reliable method of communication, the telephone. It is important to identify these contradictions in AT, as well as formulate responses and innovations to address them.

The likelihood of achieving successful transformation is determined in part by motivation. Motivation is the urge that pushes participants towards their goal. When differing motivations occur within the same activity, both in motivation level, and type of motivation, there is the potential for contradictions that interfere with reaching the object (Yamagata-Lynch & Haudenschild, 2009). However AT can use these contradictions as opportunities for innovation (Engeström, 1999). Difficult tasks can be accompanied by high motivation, if the activity has a high level of personal significance (Bedny & Karwowski, 2004; Wertsch, 1985) In this study, identifying different motivations and measures of value that result in higher motivation, can assist in improving meeting planning, coordination, or practice. In this way, the New Words Council can experience the most productive levels of motivation, while individual participants also achieve personal goals for the project. As long as motivations are not

at odds with each other, the activity can still be successful if the motivations all lead towards the object of the activity.

While motivations may differ between participants, the group's overarching goal should be unified. Group goals may change, or new ones emerge during the course of the activity. Just as with motivations, changing goals do not have to be problematic unless they constitute an obstruction to the object of the activity. In this research, emergent goals – changes in goals that occur during the process of the project – are of special interest. While the initial goal of the New Words Council was to develop new terms to modernize the language, a number of other social goals are also being achieved.

In measuring the success of an ongoing and historically situated project, it must be understood that the definition of success is similarly a product of the social and historical matrix of the activity system. As with motivations and goals, there may be more than one measure of success based on the individual experiences of participants. Also, as emergent goals are developed over the course of an activity, emergent measures of success will be developed concordantly. This research project seeks to understand what those community-specific measures of success and quality are, in order to maximize the activity's success by participant and community standards. To accomplish this, I use Activity Theory and Constructivist Grounded Theory.

6.5 Constructivist Grounded Theory

Because emergent themes in the analysis – such as participant definitions of success, and emergent goals and benefits – go a step beyond current formulations of Activity Theory (AT), it is necessary to use another framework to support their inclusion. Grounded Theory, or more specifically Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT), provides the necessary foundation for the thematic analysis needed in my research. Three characteristics of CGT are especially relevant to my research: the situated quality of knowledge, the importance of allowing data to guide theory, and the co-construction of meaning between researchers and participants. I have used CGT to support a thematic analysis in Sections 8.6, Stated and Emergent Objectives and Benefits, and 8.7, Culturally-specific Measures of Success. Constructivist Grounded Theory is used in these final sections of my analysis to support analysis that extends the concepts of Activity Theory.

Grounded Theory, introduced by Glaser & Strauss (1967) is a research orientation that encourages the data to speak for itself, not relying on other theoretical frameworks or past research to determine research questions or otherwise influence the results (Harry, Sturges, & Klinger, 2005; Seaman, 2008). Rather than using a theory to guide the research or using research data to prove or illuminate an existing theory, Grounded Theory requires that theory comes after, and out of, the research. As described by Mills, et. al., (2006) the researcher in Grounded Theory "has no preconceived ideas to prove or disprove." This orientation, allowing research to evolve

in response to the data, is a significant difference between Grounded Theory and many other theoretical traditions of research.

Many traditional Grounded Theory practitioners such as Glaser, believe that in order to not be influenced by other research and truly allow the research data to determine findings, it would be inappropriate to investigate prior research, such as inclusion of a literature review in a research project (Mills et al., 2006). In many newer forms of Grounded Theory like CGT, an examination of the literature has become more accepted, as it is seen as yet another source of data to be used along side gathered data such as interviews. This data can be used to "stimulate our thinking about properties or dimensions that we can then use to examine the data in front of us" (Mills et al., 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 45).

This research project includes both a review of the literature and integration with another framework, Activity Theory. Early Grounded Theory practitioners felt that analysis should always stand alone, and not be influenced through integration with other theories (analytical frameworks), since Grounded Theory develops findings only from the data. Use of additional theoretical frameworks for analysis would have the same danger of influencing resulting findings as a review of existing literature (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Seaman, 2008). Seaman (2008) has explored how such an integration can occur between Grounded Theory and an existing framework (Cultural-Historical Activity Theory) while preserving Grounded Theory's core intent, to allow the data itself to determine findings, "based on themes derived from close interpretations of empirical data" (p. 2). This is possible as well in this research

project, as the primary analytical framework, AT, was chosen because it was suggested by the data, and CGT allows the data to speak beyond the traditional boundaries of AT.

Since the inception of Grounded Theory in 1967 with Glaser & Strauss's book, there have been many discussions and new directions in its use in academic research. Grounded Theory now exists on a continuum or spiral (Mills et al., 2006), with Glaser and other objectivist methods towards one end, and other methods such as Constructivist Grounded Theory towards another. Objectivist Grounded Theory (OGT) asserts that through empirical research, an objective truth can be discovered (Bryant, 2003; Charmaz, 2000). OGT treats representation as "unproblematic, once a neutral point of reference can be assured for the researcher" (Bryant, 2003, p. 5). Constructivist Grounded Theory, which I use in this research, is a relativist orientation that rejects ideas of an objective reality or neutral researcher. CGT denies the existence of the distant unbiased observer-researcher, in favor of situating the researcher within the research, affected by and having an effect on the research context (Charmaz, 2008). The CGT researcher co-constructs meaning along with the participants in the study (Charmaz, 2000, 2008).

Kathy Charmaz, who is perhaps the most well-known scholar of CGT, sets forth a number of principles of CGT. As she describes, constructivism "assumes the relativism of multiple social realities, recognizes the mutual creation of knowledge by the viewer and the viewed, and aims toward interpretive understandings of subjects' meanings" (Charmaz, 2000). Characteristics of CGT that are especially relevant to

my research include: the situated quality of knowledge, the importance of allowing data to guide theory, and the co-construction of meaning between researchers and participants.

Unlike positivist or objectivist perspectives, CGT does not agree that research can result in the discovery of a single "truth." Instead, reality is seen as situated, experienced differently by different people in different situations and subject to different representations. Therefore, a goal of constructivist research is more in understanding the experiences of people, using those experiences as a basis theory that is not aimed at universal generalization or predictability (Charmaz, 2008).

In CGT and all Grounded Theory, a central tenet is to allow theory to be determined and guided by the data. The techniques used by many Grounded Theory practitioners often involve close reading, then multiple levels of coding and comparison to generate themes that are connected throughout the data. For Charmaz, however, these techniques themselves are less important than the spirit of grounded theory. As she reminds readers, "using grounded theory involves more than applying a recipe for qualitative research" (Charmaz, 2008). In fact, she bemoans the tendency for researchers to use just these surface techniques of grounded theory without a thorough understanding of the philosophy (Charmaz, 2000, 2008).

The act of conducting research results in meaning and knowledge that is co-constructed between the researcher and the participants in the study. This is a departure from other paradigms that place the researcher in an expert position in relation to participants. Fostering this dialectical relationship during the research

process and acknowledging it in the write up is a key responsibility of the CGT researcher. Making roles and relationship clear in the write up, as well as use of raw data to foreground participants' voices, "embeds the narrative of the participants in the final research outcome" (Mills et al., 2006, p. 7).

Constructivist Grounded Theory is complementary to Activity Theory as well as to Indigenous Action Research. The emphasis on close reading of all the data and allowing the data to determine the findings in CGT is very similar to the tenet of AT that requires a holistic, non-categorizing perspective of activity systems (Charmaz, 2008; Mills et al., 2006; Thorne, 2004). These qualities in turn are related to the holistic emphasis of knowledge in Indigenous epistemologies (Cochran, 2004; Gegeo & Watson-Gegeo, 2001).

The relationships between researcher and researched are reconsidered in Indigenous Action Research and Constructivist Grounded Theory. In Indigenous Action Research, the decolonization of research practice relates to ongoing struggles for justice, and acknowledgement for Indigenous communities contributions to research (Brayboy & Deyhle, 2000; L. Smith, 1999). The reason for full description of the research relationship and prioritization of participant perspectives in CGT is motivated by a desire for full disclosure and transparency in the research process, to escape from past methods that downplayed contributions of participants and obscured the process from raw data to final conclusions (Charmaz, 2000; Mills et al., 2006). While the motivations differ slightly, the analytical frameworks chosen for this study

are complementary and serve the overall research methodology of Indigenous Action Research.

6.6 Conclusion

This research on the New Words Council uses Activity Theory (AT) as the primary framework for organizing information and analysis, with the addition of data-determined thematic analysis borrowed from Constructivist Grounded Theory (CGT). AT can illustrate the dynamics of new words creation and the relationships between participants, the tools and objects they use to conduct their work, and the connections between individuals and organizations that comprise the wider language movement. Activity Theory is able to identify contradictions and innovations, differing goals and motivations, and the process of transformation inherent to activity systems. Thus, it can help identify measures of success for unique, culturally and historically situated activity like the New Words Council. Constructivist Grounded Theory allows the data to transcend the current boundaries of AT and extend the idea of transformation, using emergent themes from participant data. It is particularly useful in its reliance on the data from participants to guide resulting theory, providing a context specific voice to the experiences of individuals.

AT and CGT frameworks are compatible with Indigenous Action Research, the methodology formulated in this study. Indigenous Action Research and Activity Theory share a focus on change and community transformation, on terms set by participants themselves. CGT likewise focuses on the participants' own contributions

to the research results. These complementary frameworks intersect in this research project and help illuminate the New Words Council's progress and efforts towards transformation, as well as how the New Words Council is placed within a historical and social matrix of other activity systems.

Chapter 7:

Holism and the New Words Council

7.1 Introduction

This research seeks to understand the social value of the New Words Council to its participants and the wider community. My research questions are: 1) How does the New Words Council fit in with wider heritage efforts in the Alutiiq community; 2) In what ways does the Council work as a group towards its stated and emergent goals; and 3) How can the New Words Council meet the needs of its participants and implement ongoing strategies for improvement and community transformation? The first two questions are addressed in this chapter, while Chapter 8 addresses question three.

To address question one, I will explore how the New Words Council fits within larger community matrix of activity systems (Section 7.2). To explore question two, I look at the New Words Council's own interconnected activity triangle (Section 7.3), and the importance of responsibilities and relationships between participants in the New Words Council (Sections 7.4, 7.5). I have found that the New Words Council fits within an historic and societal matrix of other activity systems, and it forms its own irreducible matrix of participants, processes and components.

Two concepts from Activity Theory (AT), *holism* and *transformation,* are used in these analysis chapters to address the research questions. The first concept of holism in this chapter relates to the council's contextualized position within a historic

and societal matrix of activity systems, and its own irreducible matrix of participants, processes and components. Transformation in Chapter 8 provides a motivation for the activity as well as the research, and is clearly exhibited in the development and implementation of the New Words Council. In the pursuit of transformative change, participants use unique sets of tools to accomplish their objective and fulfill additional goals. These findings show that the New Words Council is an innovation-driven activity that is adaptable and governed by specific cultural values and definitions of success.

This Holism chapter is more descriptive, describing the make up and context of the New Words Council and its participants, as well as the participants' relationships to each other. The following Transformation chapter is more analytic in nature, and explores the process conducted by the council and its significance, as well as thematic analysis (through Grounded Theory) of participant benefits and measures of success. In keeping with Indigenous Action Research, participants' own words and interpretations from interviews, New Words Council meetings and follow up consultation, are used as much as possible, in order to guarantee that this analysis is in line with community understandings and values.

7.2 Community Matrix of Language Revitalization

Activity Theory (AT) takes a holistic perspective on activity systems. It seeks to understand the workings and process of an activity while taking as many characteristics (participants, rules, division of labor, etc.) as possible into

consideration. It is not limited to looking inward at an activity, however. AT also attempts to situate the activity system under investigation within the numerous other systems at play in a given context. These sections seek to provide a comprehensive description of the Kodiak New Words Council.

The New Words Council is a group created as a part of a wider Alutiiq Museum Language Program grant project (as described in Chapter 1), and so it exists in the context of a variety of efforts to reverse language shift. In addition to the New Words Council, the Museum's Alutiiq Language Program also conducts materials development, language outreach lessons, Alutiiq Language Club (an informal language study & practice group), the Alutiiq Word of the Week email, newspaper and radio broadcasts, public translation services, and videoconference language instruction to rural Kodiak schools. Staff organize monthly or bimonthly meetings of *Qik'rtarmiut Alutiit* (Alutiiq People of the Island) Regional Language Advisory Committee (a.k.a. the "Qik Committee), which is made up of representatives from area tribes, educational organizations, Native corporations, and interested individuals.

The language program works with other departments within the Alutiiq Museum to facilitate inclusion of Alutiiq language content throughout museum programming – such as in exhibit text, archaeological site names, artifact labeling and educational outreach efforts. Because of the small size of the language program and its integration with other efforts and museum departments, participants do not view the New Words Council as divisible from the larger program and movement. Therefore, any comments made by participants quoted herein should be understood to refer to the

New Words Council *as well as* the larger language program, unless the participant specifies the New Words Council.

The Alutiiq Museum's language program is not the only organization involved in language revitalization. Although few organizations have extensive language programming, many seek to incorporate Alutiiq language into existing and new programs, publications, and events. A number of local tribes, corporations and organizations have representatives on the *Qik'rtarmiut Alutiit* (Alutiiq People of the Island) Regional Language Advisory Committee and follow the progress of the New Words Council. Most tribes incorporate Alutiiq language into cultural events and activities, and one tribe, the Native Village of Afognak, has begun developing Alutiiq learning materials and curriculum. As the New Words Council is the only formal body of fluent speakers that meets regularly, there is a high demand by other organizations and individuals for their knowledge and input.

While the New Words Council meetings are held in relative isolation, the New Words Council is constantly informed by and also informing the other efforts that are occurring in the Alutiiq community. The New Words Council is further affected by larger forces such as federal funding levels for language documentation and economic factors that alter availability of Native corporation institutional support. Participants are well aware of the sociopolitical context affecting the New Words Council and broader language effort. Their comments on perpetuation of programs show a concern that this project and wider language revitalization effort, like so many before it, may cease to exist without future funding.

(AC, learner/staff): And we've got about one year left of this grant.

(MH, Elder): Oh.

(AC, learner/staff): It's supposed to end next summer.

(MH, Elder): Ah.

(AC, learner/staff): Do you think we should continue having the New Words Council?

(MH, Elder): They should continue. We can't forget it [i.e. the language revitalization]. If we do, it's gonna die again.

This Elder, and others who have seen projects come and go, have been reluctant to get their hopes up over a program they know is highly dependent on federal grants and private donations. An Elder from Kodiak recommends, "I think we all need a pat on the back, and just keep doing what we're doing... And keep the grants coming!" (FP, Elder). Her concern over funding results from participation in a number of short-lived grant projects, but the worry that everything will end suddenly is beginning to ease, due to the nearing of a critical mass of community-based efforts. With the growing number of culture and language related programs in the Kodiak community, the networked efforts are ensuring continuity where it was lacking before. This network of Kodiak efforts with similar objectives is akin to the concept of *knotworking*, where multiple activity systems are interlinked based on shared goals (Thorne, 2005). Below is a chart illustrating some of the main projects and programs in the Kodiak region that are related to heritage revitalization:

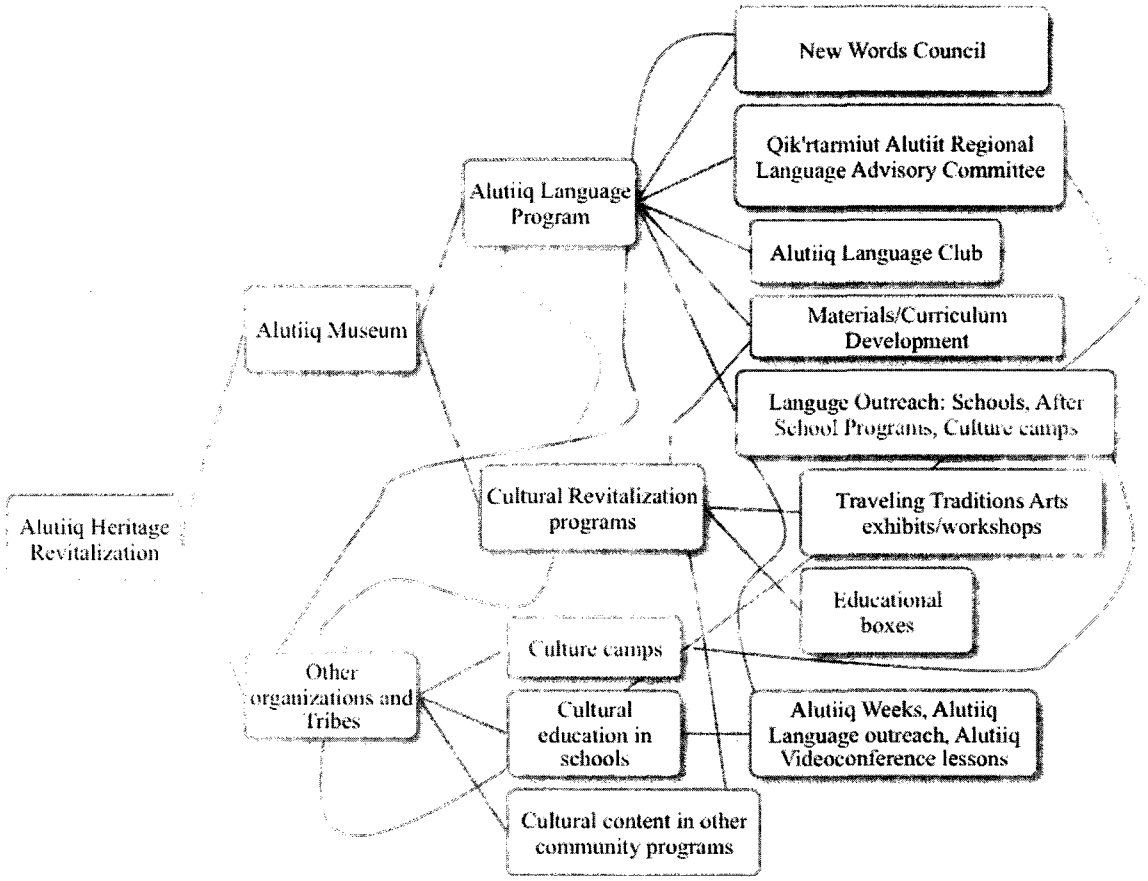

Fig. 7.1 Alutiiq Culture & Language Activities

The multitude of connections between heritage activities cannot be adequately expressed in the above figure. Many cultural and language activities are carried out at the same events, and by different organizations working in partnership. For example, an activity at one of the culture camps may be led by a learner and Elder from the museum's language program, although the camp itself is run by a tribe in partnership with the school district. In their activity they may use teaching materials developed in

a language program project, but published through a grant run by the school district, and tested during a previous Alutiiq Week program in one of the village schools.

Likewise, the New Words Council is made up of Elders and learners representing any of ten different island tribes and six local Native corporations, who may be involved in a number of other culture and language related activities. Some of these activities include: the Elders Council organized by the non-profit Sun'ami, Inc., The Native Educators of the Alutiiq Region, the Native Village of Afognak's *Uswillraarat Qipayaat* after School Program and Dig Afognak Culture Camps, Kodiak Island Borough School District's Native Education Curriculum Committee, Alutiiq videoconference lessons, and Alutiiq Weeks, the Alutiiq Museum's *Traveling Traditions* arts program, and volunteer language outreach lessons. Every one of these programs, projects, and efforts can constitute its own activity system, and are linked together through similarity of goals, objectives, participants, and intended recipients.

7.3 The New Words Council Activity Triangle

The Kodiak New Words Council is itself a complex matrix of connected components and processes. Utilization of an activity system triangle helps to organize these components and understand their connections to each other. Further analysis of the interactions within the triangle, as will be discussed in the Transformation section, can help identify successes, impediments and contradictions between items in the triangle, and provide opportunities for innovation and improvement (See Figure 7.2).

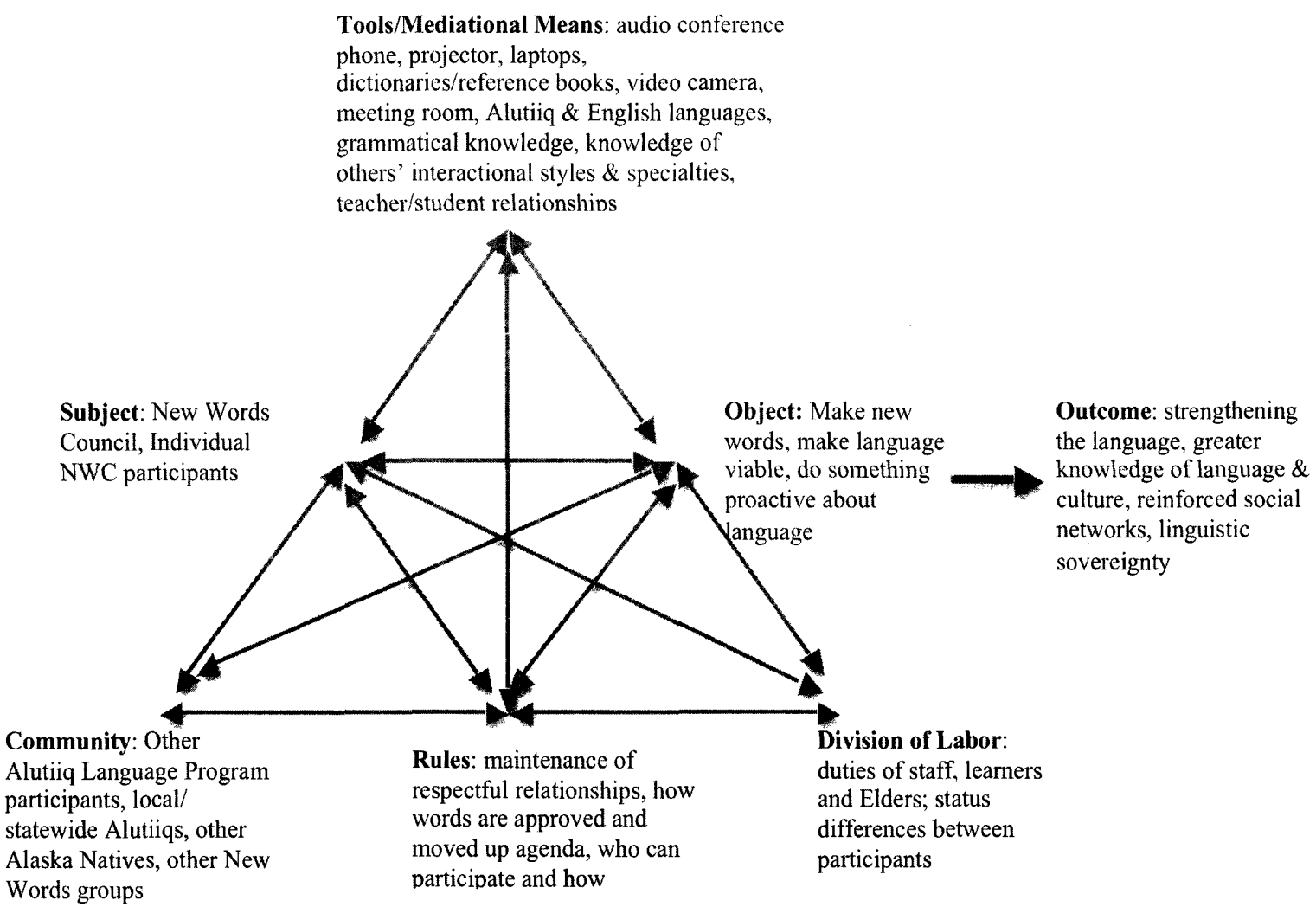

Fig. 7.2 Kodiak New Words Council Activity Triangle

It is relatively straightforward to plot out the Kodiak New Words Council on an Activity Triangle. The subjects of the New Words Council activity system are the members of the council. The object of the New Words Council's activity is to create new words, and increase the viability and resilience of the Alutiiq language. Emergent outcomes that will be discussed in greater detail in the "Transformation" chapter include social and intellectual benefits, and contributions to community healing. Mediational tools will also be discussed in the Transformation chapter, and include physical tools such as communication, computing and presentation technologies, writing instruments, audio and video recorders, reference materials and writing implements. Intangible tools include knowledge of the Alutiiq and English languages, knowledge of other participants and their communication styles, and awareness of cultural protocols of communication. The community can be defined in a number of different ways, based on a micro or macro perspective. It may be defined as the participants in the Alutiiq language program or revitalization effort, the wider Alutiiq community both in Kodiak and elsewhere, other Alaska Native or Indigenous groups more generally, or other communities engaged in new words creation generally. For the purposes of this study, the community generally refers to the Alutiiq people of the Kodiak Archipelago, or when referring to New Words Council participants, to the Kodiak Alutiiq language revitalization effort.

The rules of the New Words Council are both unspoken and stated, though individuals' perceptions of the rules can change. Some rules are related to the intangible tool of cultural protocol – knowing how to appropriately interact with

Elders and other learners. Other rules, such as how a word progresses up the agenda towards final approval and onto the master word list are stated often at meetings. Other rules are more flexible. For example, although all words must be confirmed the month after being approved, a word that has undergone a slight change or has had a dialectical variant added may be considered similar enough to the word approved the previous month to not require additional confirmation. Or, while an unspoken rule is that a critical mass of Elders (usually at least 5 or 6) is needed for Elders to feel comfortable in making any binding word choices, this also depends on the will of those present at a meeting – no specific number is required to have a "quorum."

> It's nice that it's not structured in a way that is a voting thing, or they have to have a quorum, or that there [is] not the sort of artificial bureaucratic structure that's laid upon it. The Elders that are present in the room, and those Elders decide if they're comfortable moving forward, or if you know, if so-and-so's not here, and I think they might dissent on this, we're going to hold it until next time. So it's nice that that arrangement is consensus based, and people present in the room look out for those who are not there (AD, learner).

While no official quorum is required, the desire of Council members to hold off on certain decisions often has to do with whether there is adequate representation of the various island sub-dialects, particularly the northern (Karluk, Larsen Bay, Afognak, or Ouzinkie) and southern (Kaguyak, Akhiok or Old Harbor) speaking styles. There are fewer northern sub-dialect speakers, and it is an unspoken rule that at least one northern-style speaker needs to be at each meeting for decisions to be legitimate. For

further discussion of meetings, see A Typical New Words Council Meeting, Section 2.7.

7.4 Division of Labor

There has to be a compromise, as far as making words... that's what the whole concept of the New Words Council is...the agreement on the new word" (SM, learner).

The division of labor – the tasks carried out by various participants – is intricate, based on formal and informal arrangements, and collaboratively conducted. Responsibilities that rest primarily with learners, including project staff, include: setting up meetings, providing start up ideas for discussion, asking productive questions, explaining concepts in English for some modern concepts and technologies, asking for confirmation on decided words, and more. Responsibilities that rest primarily with the Elders include: providing linguistic and cultural expertise, providing consent and confirming word choices, providing Alutiiq translations and humor, and determining how long a word remains in discussion.

Activities in which the learners and Elders share the responsibility (although usually one subgroup shares a higher level or specific aspect of the responsibility) include: staying focused on the discussion, fine-tuning word and suffix choices, learning, sharing and eliciting opinions, contributing agenda items, reconciling between different opinions, determining dialectical differences, and achieving consensus. Many of the responsibilities and tasks are shared between Elders and learners. It is not the intent to break these responsibilities down for categorization

purposes, but to show how interlinked the roles of all participants are on the council. See Table 7.1 for a division of labor breakdown.

Table 7.1 Division of Labor on the New Words Council. (Note: larger X denotes a higher level of responsibility).

Responsibility	**Elders**	**Learners/Staff**
Setting up meetings		X
Start up suggestions for words		X
Seeking confirmation for words		X
Asking productive questions		X
Explanatinon of technical concepts & technologies		X
Keeping discussion focused	X	X
Fine-tuning word/suffix choices	X	x
Sharing opinions	X	x
Contribution of words for agenda	X	X
Reconciling between different opinions	x	X
Determining dialectical differfences	X	X
Achieving consensus	X	X
Linguistic expertise	X	
Providing consent on word choices	X	
Alutiiq humor	X	
Determining length of discussion	X	

The Elders, learners, and staff members who participate clearly could not conduct the work of creating new words without each other for collaboration, information, and support. Each participant has a role and is reliant on the rest of the council for the activity of New Words creation to work. It is an activity strongly reliant on strong relationships between participants.

7.5 Relationships

It's a good feeling knowing that I can connect into the past, you know, through this language that is shared (PA, learner).

The relationships between subjects on the New Words Council are important in maintaining group cohesion. Individuals on the council have years and decades-long relationships with one another, primarily formed outside of the New Words Council, but reinforced and fostered through continued involvement. A bridge metaphor to illustrate these connections provides an additional means of illustrating the important connections between participants. This metaphor is an alternative depiction of a portion of the New Words Council activity system, drawing attention to the subjects and their relationships and importance to each other, rather than a simple functional breakdown of their duties and division of labor (see Fig. 7.3).

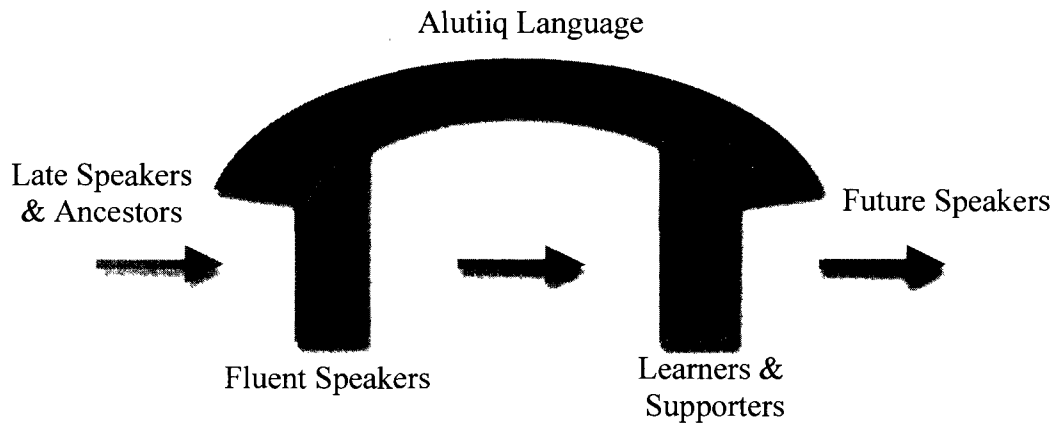

Fig. 7.3: Bridge of Alutiiq Language. Metaphor of New Words Council Participant Relationships

The New Words Council is made up of Elders and learners, although the formal members are the Elders. They form a reciprocal relationship, each group bearing part of the workload in achieving the formal goal of the New Words Council, which is to make new Alutiiq words and modernize the language. Not only do we (current learners, supporters and Elders) hold up the 'bridge' of our language by working together, but our shared effort connects us to each other, to friends and family members who have passed on, and to the learners of the future, who we are laying the groundwork for.

Elders are important to learners because they connect us to the language and to the late Elders who they learned from – in this way they are the living embodiment of the culture. In the case of myself, the researcher, many fluent Elders have shared with me their memories of my great-grandparents from Karluk. As that generation was the last in my family to speak the language, forging a connection to them through still-

living Elders is personally significant. Other learners echo similar stories. A Kodiak learner makes an explicit connection between the Elders in the program and their tie to the ancestors before us:

> The Elders that are still living, and speaking our language, they are carrying that knowledge, just in their minds and in their hearts, and so to be able to communicate with them and value them, and talk to them in their own, their language, that's the only way we can truly honor that knowledge, honor them, honor our ancestors, and so, it's a tie to honoring our past (AD, learner).

The Elders involved in the New Words Council connect us to our ancestors and past speakers, but are more than just a conduit to individuals who are no longer living – many of them have "adopted" learners as family members, and treat their learner's children as grandchildren. These Elders both carry and share the family and cultural ties that are expressed through language use in the Alutiiq community.

Elders too, feel that their involvement in the Alutiiq language program helps reinforce their own connection to family and culture. Many participants consider a specific family member as their inspiration for being involved, and that this effort helps to carry on their memory. As one Elder recalls, "I feel like my dad left this language program, and just the culture that he was so involved in with me. I…I need to honor that" (FP, Elder). Another Elder recalls her mother, and her encouragement to keep speaking and teaching the language, remembering, "…Mom used to tell us, 'try to teach your kids Aleut words'…She said, 'You know we'll loose all our culture if we don't do what we're supposed to do…Never forget your language" (MH, Elder).

Elders feel that their relationships to learners are important as well, but in a different direction. While learners feel their work with Elders helps connect them to their family and cultural heritage, Elders feel that working with learners will help them connect with the future. This is especially true in today's rapidly changing technological world. As an Elder comments:

> And I know it's gonna work, because, because of you, and all that little, education that, you know computers and all that technical stuff, otherwise I don't think, me and (FP), all Elders alone would never get that far, if it wasn't for you and other [learners]. (SM) [is] pretty helpful too. I only wish (SH) was here, but she had to move you know (NA, Elder).

The Elders encourage learners to participate in the New Words Council, because they feel that today's learners are going to reach tomorrow's new fluent speakers. With most of the speakers on the council being in their seventies, they are rarely involved in teaching the language to children directly. Instead, with the help of today's learners, who will provide the instruction and create learning materials with the new terms being developed, the reach of the Elders is extended to generations who have not yet been born.

It is clear that the Elders are thinking about the future speakers while conducting the work on the council. When discussing a word she wished to be approved, an Elder insisted, "we're thinking about the future generations. What word *they're* gonna use" (IC, Elder). She wanted to impart the importance of the word being chosen, as it would potentially be used in perpetuity by the group of fluent

speakers that would be created in the future of language revitalization. This emphasis on future fluency – of children and descendants rather than the current adult learners was also found in Bell and Marlow's (2009) study of students in the Dena'ina Language Institute in Kenai, Alaska. They noted:

> In this way the adults become the cultural brokers vis-à-vis the language. Further, by passing on the expectation of fluency to future generations, they extend the timeline available for full restoration of the language (p. 7).

Participants are not simply "passing the buck" of fluency to future generations. After years of learning, many realize that the process of revitalization is going to be more complex and time intensive than initially hoped.

In the first few years of the language revitalization program in Kodiak, community members believed that the immediate next step after a three-year Master-Apprentice project was the opening of an immersion school, taught by learners and aided by Elders. This has not materialized, partially because learners did not feel their fluency was high enough for that kind of teaching, and there were simply too few learners who were also willing and able (due to obligations or employment) to become teachers. Thus, the horizon for creating new fully fluent child speakers has been pushed back as adult learners continue seeking opportunities to increase their fluency (such as participation in the New Words Council), and conduct short outreach lessons with the aid of Elders.

The Elders on the New Words Council have a keen awareness of the limited time available to conduct their work and pass on the language. Thus, while they

realize it may be up to future learners to carry on our efforts, the sense of urgency for language survival is constantly present. The importance of the bridge of generations is emphasized for the fluent Elders as they realize that they now are the experts, and no longer have their own Elders to call on:

> I am realizing today that we don't have anyone to call on. [My wife] and I do not have any Elder to call, today to try to... help us with some of the difficulties we have on some of the words (FC, Elder).

This sense of mortality is present in the New Words Council and language program, as Elders and learners remember and honor those speakers and family members who have passed on, and contemplate their own and learners' roles in the perpetuation of the language. As one Elder reminded the researcher, "you guys are going to have to end up being the Elders in time here, pretty soon" (DK, Elder).

7.6 Conclusion

In this section I have addressed the following two research questions: How does the New Words Council fit in with wider heritage efforts in the Alutiiq community?; and, In what ways does the Council work as a group towards its stated and emergent goals? In examination of the first question, I have found that the Kodiak Alutiiq New Words Council gains strength from the internal structure of participants, cultural rules and norms, the larger matrix of heritage efforts in the community and the shared object of creating new words to modernize the language. It is through the

interconnected participants and community efforts that those involved hope to perpetuate language revitalization in the community.

To answer the second question, I examined the roles and relationships between participants on the council as they worked to create new terms. The most significant aspect of the New Words Council activity triangle is the relationships between learners and Elders. These relationships allow the activity to proceed smoothly and foster a collaborative division of labor. Furthermore, the relationships between participants are individually significant. Like a bridge, the learners today connect Elders on the New Words Council to future generations of speakers, while learners' relationships with Elders help to connect them to past speakers, ancestors, and ultimately, our shared cultural heritage.

Chapter 8:

Transformation

8.1 Introduction

The New Words Council is an innovation-driven process that is adaptable and governed by specific cultural values and definitions of success. It follows a historic path, and is complicated by obstructions and innovations, and aided by mediating tools in achieving the group's goals. Transformation informs the activity on many levels: change over time, and innovation within the New Words Council, as well as transformation at the level of linguistic and community survival for the Kodiak Alutiiq community. In following with the positive transformation emphasized in Indigenous Action Research, I have identified community-specific measures of success, perceived benefits, and areas for continual improvement as provided by project participants. This chapter explores my third research question: How can the New Words Council meet the needs of its participants and implement ongoing strategies for improvement and community transformation?

Using the framework of Activity Theory, I outline the historic path on which this terminology development activity is situated, and explore how mediation occurs on the New Words Council to help the participants achieve their goals. Also through the lens of Activity theory, I discuss contradictions and resulting innovations that occurred during the research period that have impeded or encouraged positive transformative change. Finally, I use Constructivist Grounded Theory to extend the

construct of transformation beyond the scope of conventional Activity Theory. This has enabled me to identify community-specific definitions of success, and explain the stated and emergent objectives and benefits of the New Words Council's activity as described by participants. These benefits, discussed in Sections 8.5 through 8.6.6, are both social and intellectual and incorporate healing and resistance. The measures of success defined by participants in Section 8.7 involve continuity, commitment, and broad participation.

8.2 Historicity

As described in Chapter 2, the Alutiiq Language Program and the New Words Council fit within a historical path that is still in progress. In referring to language revitalization as a path, it should not be assumed that this study or Activity Theory rely on a linear understanding of time. Instead, the language, language revitalization, and New Words Council occur on a path that is beset by challenges, changes in direction, and cyclical efforts that do not have a set beginning or end.

Within the past hundred years, Alutiiq villages went from trilingualism, with families speaking Alutiiq, Russian, and English, to English only, often in the space of one generation. Just as suddenly, Alutiiq communities are trying to reverse this shift while it is still feasible to do so with the help of remaining speakers. Still, the project and wider program exist under the historical shadow of linguistic oppression. Some of the Elder participants are bemused by the recent turnaround in public opinion about

the language. The Elders in today's New Words Council went from being punished by teachers for speaking Alutiiq, to being asked to become teachers themselves:

> I don't know now, eh! (laughs) Up there, I don't know how they're telling them! We used to get punished, man. Never used to tell us to talk in Aleut in the school. Now what we did. We have to teach them. Mm-hmm. It was bad. 'cause we used to...English and Aleut, we got to get punished. Uh huh. Now this [is] coming back. Trying to learn how to be talking Aleut. (PP, Elder)

The process of creating new words, within the context of the larger language and cultural revitalization movement, is one of the numerous paths, or endeavors, by which the community is enacting its common goal of linguistic survival.

8.3 Mediation

The New Words Council uses mediating tools to accomplish their objective of terminology development, as well as strengthen social relationships. Mediational means include physical tools such as communication, computing and presentation technologies, writing instruments, audio and video recorders, reference materials and writing implements. Intangible tools include knowledge of both Alutiiq and English languages, knowledge of other participants and their communication styles, and awareness of cultural protocols of communication. These tools are depicted in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1 Physical and Intangible Tools used by the New Words Council

Tool/Mediational Means	Physical	Intangible/Mental
Books/written materials/visual aids	X	
Audioconference equipment	X	
Dry erase board or projection equipment	X	
writing tools	X	
computer and video camera	X	
Knowledge of spoken Alutiiq and English		X
Knowledge of written Alutiiq and English		X
Previous knowledge/relationships with other participants		X
Awareness of cultural protocols		X
Understanding of new words process		X

8.3.1 Physical Tools

From the perspective of community members, analysis of the physical tools used in a meeting, such as pencils, paper, and conferencing equipment, may seem like a meaningless academic exercise. Much of the tool use by the council is seemingly mundane. However, every set of tools is unique to the cultural context in which it is being utilized – even the same tools will be used differently by different groups (Nasir & Hand, 2006). Thus, when participants use the audio conference phone to speak to

each other in Alutiiq between villages, or gently tease learners calling in from afar, their use is unique to the context of the Kodiak New Words Council.

Many of the tools used during New Words Council meetings were mentioned in the Introduction section in A Typical New Words Council Meeting (see Section 2.7). These include a dry-erase board for writing up words under discussion, and the later-introduced overhead projection technology to project the word choices and modifications. They also include audio and video recorders used to document meetings, as well as Alutiiq and Central Yup'ik dictionaries, writing tools, and images of desired words shown to Elders to clarify the desired object during discussion.

A good example of physical tool use occurred during the September, 2008 meeting. At the request of learners, the Remembered Words section of the agenda focused on the names for a number of the native flower species of Kodiak Archipelago. With the word iris, Kodiak members used the audio conference phone to ask members in Old Harbor if they could remember the word. The following word was lupine, and staff projected images of lupines for the Elders to view to help spark their memory. For the beach pea flower, a learner was asked to check her dictionary, to which she had added additional words over the past six years of learning, to see if she had documented any flower terms from her mentors. In all of these cases, physical tools (telephone, projected image, and dictionary) were used to find the words needed under discussion. The tools used were helpful to the Elders in identifying the species under discussion, but the group was able to recall only one of the flower words, which is lupine: *kukuRiikuq*.

Many of the physical tools used in the New Words Council relate to accomplishing the formal goal – to make new words to modernize the Alutiiq language. However, a number of these technologies simultaneously aid the participants in achieving other emergent or personal goals. Emergent goals such as language learning, healing, social interaction, and cultural connection will be considered in Section 8.6. Whether the objective is a group or individual goal, or is formal or emergent, they are accomplished with the aid of mediating tools.

8.3.2 Intangible Tools

There are also a number of intangible (also known as mental or symbolic) tools at use in the New Words Council. These intangible tools serve the same function as physical tools in helping participants achieve their goals. They may be more difficult to study, however, as many of these tools are not readily apparent in observation. Primary intangible tools include knowledge of Alutiiq and English languages, and cultural protocols for interacting and reinforcing relationships.

The most obvious intangible tool is knowledge of the Alutiiq language. This is needed to create words that sound Alutiiq and conform to Alutiiq grammatical structure as to be understandable to speakers. Decisions about final word confirmation are often made on the basis of whether a fluent speaker not present for the discussion would understand the word if they heard it. As one Elder commented on the list of choices in the February, 2008 meeting, "I would understand every one of them" (DK, Elder). The words approved in that meeting included *igarsuun* – typewriter (lit. "thing

to write with"), and *Kicarwik* – the city of Anchorage (lit. "place to anchor"). All of the choices under discussion were potential new words, because they were understandable to a fluent speaker.

It is also important to know English to make new Alutiiq words, as it is the primary language used to conduct business during the meetings. While many of the official actions of the council, such as tabling a word or approving it are done in Alutiiq, much of the discussion, being about English words and concepts, is done in English. In the September 2008 meeting, the confirmation of group decisions by myself, a learner, were conducted primarily in English, while Elders on the audio conference form Old Harbor responded with familiar Alutiiq phrases of assent:

> (AC, learner/staff): Next is toaster oven. *Tug'awingcuk* – "little oven"...Is that okay here in Kodiak? [the group voices agreement]...Okay, how about in Old Harbor?
>
> (Elder 1, Old Harbor): *Asirtuq*. (It is good.)
>
> (Elder 2, Old Harbor): *Aa'a*. (Yes.)
>
> (Elder 3, Old Harbor): *Asirtuq*. (It is good.)

The use of English may change in the future as participating learners' fluency enables, or as previously-created terms allow, more of the communication to occur in Alutiiq. For the time being, however, the necessary mediating language is English.

Another aspect of the language that is used as a meditational means in New Words Council meetings is the written word – the written form of Alutiiq. Since Alutiiq, as mentioned previously, is traditionally oral, the existence of the written form

of the language in meetings serves a number of functions related to achieving the stated and emergent goals of the council. In a physical sense, the written words on the agenda and projected screen provide a means of tracking and following the discussion. The fact that these words are written down and recorded, however, provides an intangible means of solidifying the language. To the participants, this quality of the language is a symbolic way of making it permanent. This is a method of ensuring that today's efforts will not be wasted, as the materials will be available for future generations.

An understanding of the cultural protocols for interaction is an important meditational means. Use of proper interactional protocols in speaking to Elders is imperative in getting through an agenda, and mastery of them is key to the success of a meeting. Also knowing where those boundaries can be pushed is an important task, which I have encountered frequently as meeting moderator. I must be careful not to cut off Elders who wish to speak, but also must respond to the council's desire to proceed in the agenda. Thus I must make constant judgment calls, and suggest actions to the council, as to whether they wish to continue discussion, confirm a decision on one or more choices, or table a word. Many of these judgment calls are based on evaluation of body language and discussion intensity, and have become ingrained after years of working closely with the Elders and other participants on the council.

A particularly difficult decision involved sun hat. In discussions that occurred over a number of months in 2008, it became clear that finding agreement on one word was going to be difficult, and that there were also significant variations between

different villages. I had to be careful to not offend any Elders whose suggestions might be contrary to most of the rest of the group, though some suggestions were not considered "proper grammar" by some. To appease all who felt strongly on the choice, two different words with three variations each were chosen by the Elders in November, 2008: *macam slaapaa/sliapaa/sapga* (lit. "the sun's hat), and *macami slaapaa/sliapaa/sapga* (lit. "hat in the sun"). However, the discussion was not completely over. In September, 2009, an alternate word for sun hat, *tunguhnaillquutaq saapek* (lit. "hat that keeps you from getting sun tanned/burned") was confirmed, making sun hat the word with the most variations on the master new words list. As meeting moderator, it is often my role to navigate through a Western-style meeting agenda while respecting the cultural protocols that require respecting (and sometimes confirming) all opinions, even if this results in a less-than concise result.

8.3.3 Participants as Mediators

As discussed in the previous section, an understanding of rules and social protocols among participants is an important means of mediating activity in the New Words Council. Individuals in the New Words Council activity triangle are depicted as subjects and as part of the larger community in which the Activity is situated. Because of the multiplicity of roles on the council, it can also be interpreted that learners, elders, and myself as the project Principal Investigator and meeting

coordinator are mediators for each other in the effort to achieve the object or goal of the activity.

The fluent Elders, and to a lesser extent, myself as an advanced learner can act as mediators for less fluent participants as they seek to understand agenda items, such as etymology and literal meanings of chosen words or options. For example, in the April, 2008 meeting, a learner asked about a word under discussion for taxicab, "What does that mean? The first word? I mean, the literal?" (L3, Learner). Elders and more advanced learners then explained the meaning of the word in discussion. Typically in a discussion like this, Elders state the full translation of a word, and advanced learners contribute a more linguistic breakdown of word morphemes by root word and suffix/es or are assisted by Elders to do so. More advanced speakers mediate the language for the less-advanced learners. For further discussion of learning in the New Words Council, see Section 8.6.2, Intellectual Benefits.

Learners can mediate for Elders as they assist them in attending and participating in meetings, providing transportation or setting up the audio conference phone for calling in. They also frequently help Elders find their place on the agenda, negotiate between the printed agenda sheets and the ever-changing agenda projected on the screen. Some learners mediate the written form of Alutiiq for Elders, who despite their fluency are sometimes newer to use of the written language. This assistance between participants, some with knowledge of the spoken, and some with knowledge of the written language, ensures everyone participating understands what words are under discussion. When seeking consensus between word choices I

announce the current choices, for the benefit of Elders who are present as well as those calling in over the audio conference, as those not in the room in Kodiak can not see the projected agenda.

As the moderator of most meetings, I have the responsibility for making sure participants get through the agenda, and discerning when a discussion is not progressing towards a decision. Often this requires determining whether multiple words should be chosen, or if all words under discussion should be returned to discussion at the next meeting. This must be done carefully to not hurt feelings or appear to disregard any participant's opinions. I often use humor and/or Alutiiq phrases to mediate in these circumstances. For instance, in the June 2008 meeting, the following interaction occurred after a lengthy discussion of the different words for Elder and ancestor did not result in a consensus:

(AC, learner/staff): 'Should we "*keluuwararu*" it? (put it aside for now)"

Everyone laughs.

(IC, Elder): *Aa'a. Kita!* (Yes. Go on!)

(DK, Elder): *Keluuwarsgu.* (Put it aside.)

In the above example, the Elders in the group laughed partially because of the awkward and redundant code-switching I used. *Keluwararu* is a command rather than a question, and already references the object, so while I knew I was using it incorrectly, I went ahead and said it, knowing it would sound funny and lighten the atmosphere. Such meditational strategies are important in keeping the meetings positive and moving forward.

As the moderator in most meetings, it is also my role to mediate for other participants, learners and Elders to encourage different or new ways of thinking about the words under discussion. Sometimes this is done with questions. For example, to aid in the decision-making process, I might ask an Elder how you would use a particular word in a sentence. This might help identify problems with one of the words in discussion or make one stand out as a more appropriate choice. Other times when the group is having a hard time formulating ideas, I may ask questions or make suggestions, if only to provide a starting point for further discussion.

Another mediation strategy involves getting Elders thinking about word creation methods that are different than what may be currently under discussion. For example, in the June, 2008 meeting, participants initially discussed a loan-translation for "microwave," working on how you would say "little wave place" in Alutiiq. When Elders said that the options just did not sound right since waves are supposed to occur in water, I asked, "So should we focus on how it cooks the food fast?" This suggestion led Elders to formulate a word that sounded more appropriate to them: *cuskasqaq kenirwik*, "fast place to cook." This interaction had an additional benefit for learners, who could observe that a wave – which can take many forms in English – is not as flexible in Alutiiq.

The multiplicity of roles held by myself and other members of the New Words Council can seem stressful or at odds, but through the concept of mediation in AT, these roles all act in concert to aid the subjects (participants) in achieving their goals. Thus, as organizer, Principal Investigator, museum staff member, learner, tribal

member, young person, and friend, the roles that are not congruent between Alutiiq culture and institutional responsibilities are negotiated. I hope that my skills can be useful to other participants in achieving the goals of the New Words Council – both the formal stated goal of terminology development, and the additional emergent goals discussed later in this chapter.

8.4 Contradictions and Innovations

While the New Words Council has not experienced drastic contradictions that would prevent progress, it is constantly changing and innovating to improve the word-creation process and achieve its goals. Certain strategies have evolved in order to allow greater access and ease of participation. Practices begun in the first year have been altered, improved, or eliminated, as the group has coalesced and internalized the processes by which they develop new terms.

An example of a practice that has changed over time is the visual representation of the agenda. Initially, agendas were printed and given to each member at the table for reference and note taking. When learners began to ask questions about how to spell or translate words, or a number of different choices were under discussion, project staff would write the various options and their spellings on a white board in the room. In an effort to streamline my own workload by generating meeting notes during the meeting rather than after, I began making changes directly to words on the agenda on my laptop. It was suggested by learners in 2008 that I project the agenda on the wall with an overhead projector, so that participants could follow

the meeting's progress and make notes on their own agendas. This has aided in some participant's personal goals of increasing their literacy and linguistic knowledge. As an added benefit, staff are now able to email the meeting notes to interested participants immediately after a meeting, rather than waiting until time allows for typing up of a formal set of minutes.

Another example of change in practice over time inclusion of rural or distant participants, which remains a work in progress. In the first year of the New Words Council, two different videoconferencing methods were used to try to connect to different rural Elder members of the council. The first was the school district's satellite videoconference network with village schools around the island. This required participants in all locations to report to a school or the district offices to use the equipment. In an effort to simplify the meeting process, an internet-based videoconference system *Skype* was used a number of times. Due to often-slow internet speeds in the rural sites, this method was dropped early in 2008.

Participants in the villages and elsewhere now call in to an audio conference. This format is not limited by location or internet speed, but it does in some cases inconvenience Elders who do not want to call in on their own from a rural site, when a group call-in site is not available. However, audio conferencing has allowed learners in locations across the island and even the Lower-48 to participate, and one Kodiak Elder has called in to some meetings when homebound due to health reasons. Inclusion of rural participants continues to be an innovation-in-progress for the New Words Council, and it is hoped that with greater access to technology and high-speed

communications, that Elders and learners who cannot be physically present at meetings will be able to participate with greater ease. Improving the process of the New Words Council is a continual effort, with varying levels of success, but characterized by innovation from Elders, learners, and staff.

8.5 Community-specific Definitions of Success

As the New Words Council is situated within a cultural and historical matrix, its context must be considered in understanding the measures of success as determined by participants. The following sections takes principles of positive transformation from Action Research and Activity Theory, and uses Constructivist Grounded Theory to explore the themes discovered in participant interviews. Constructivist Grounded Theory, as previously discussed, allows the data to speak for itself in generating information to explore the research questions (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Seaman, 2008). This allows participants to provide their own opinions and beliefs about the council, rather than relying on outside standards to determine the success or value of the New Words Council.

It is important in this study to reveal that true community-centered goals, motivations, and measures of success defined by the Alutiiq community, so that the stated and emergent goals of the New Words Council can be accomplished, while also attending to standards of success and quality as determined by participants themselves. Thus, the measure of success of the New Words Council should be in how we have accomplished the formal and emergent objectives of the council, what other benefits

are perceived by participants, and what types of improvement are continually being implemented.

8.6 Stated and Emergent Objectives and Benefits

The core, formal goal of the New Words Council is to develop new Alutiiq terms to modernize the language and make it more viable in modern times.

> The New Word Council I think it's very important, because...our world is changing so much, and so much newer things coming to pass. You now, ah. So like technology, there's so many words describing technology, the new technology, which we never had before, and our Alutiiq people of course didn't speak it in those terms, because there was no, there wasn't much technology back then. So it's important to know, or make up, use those words with an Alutiiq flair, so that we can understand them, and blend it in the, the Alutiiq language (JK, Elder).

We have been successful in developing new words. In the first three years of the New Words Council, we have created 264 words. This may not seem to be a large number, but since Alutiiq can build on existing words through modifying postbases, the chosen words have created the potential for many more. Each word has undergone a rigorous approval and confirmation process spanning two or more meetings, limiting the quantity of words approved in favor of greater consensus. Participants feel that we have successfully created words for modern items and concepts that are needed for modernizing the language, and that there is a structure in place for more words to be

created in the future. As one Elder proudly states, "We used to talk Alutiiq and just [have to] go back to English, but now we have our own words (NA, Elder)."

It is too soon to know if the second part of the formal objective of the New Words Council – making the language more viable – is a success. The three-year project funding the New Words Council is not yet completed, and the planned booklet of new words from the three years has not been distributed. It is certainly a feeling of the participants that this will result in a greater level of modern viability, but future research will have to determine if that is the case.

The perceived benefits of the New Words Council go far beyond the number of words created and how well it has contributed to modern viability. Participants see these benefits as values that should be encouraged and fostered in this and other language and heritage projects. The benefits as described below, are as important in the perceived success of the council as the formal object. They are emergent goals. As a benefit of the council is identified as learning, the council's success is also judged in its ability (at least for some individuals) to aid in literacy and fluency development. The social benefits can now also be seen as emergent goals that can be measured in terms of participation levels and qualitative measures. Many of these benefits were not planned, and would not have been noticed if the measures of success for the New Words Council had been predetermined.

8.6.1 Social benefits

"To be working on [the language] for our future is very exciting" (IC, Elder).

The New Words Council has become something that Elders look foreword to – as an event where they get to talk Alutiiq with other Elders from around the archipelago, and feel involved in a productive, positive effort that will benefit the community and future generations. One of the most apparent benefits for the participants of the New Words Council are the social interactions it helps to foster, among Elders and others who rarely see each other due to social isolation, health, family obligations or other factors.

> (AC, learner/staff): Did people in Old Harbor, were they interested?
>
> (MH, Elder): Oh Yeah! Yeah. I was anyway. But it seemed like more of them, like M. get excited when I tell him. I said we are going to have a New Words Council meeting. You and W. coming? And they said, "Yes, we'll be there!"

The social benefits for Elders are seen by the learners in the New Words Council:

> Oh, they, when I see them or hear them talking to each other in Alutiiq, which I hadn't, um, witnessed before being involved with the program, it's...they just, uh, love the social connection and social interaction that they are able to have, um, it's something that they look forward to doing, it helps them to feel, I think, important or help them feel good about themselves and that they are doing something really good for their community and for younger generations (PA, learner).

The social value for Elders goes far beyond the benefit of being able to socialize with other Alutiiq speakers, although the benefit of social interaction should not be discounted. Elders feel that they are creating a legacy to pass down to their children and descendants – that they are contributing to the survival of the culture and language. A learner and daughter of a New Words Council member discusses the value of the New Words Council activity for her mother:

> I see it, like my mom, who she really, it...I don't know, I don't know how to describe it. She just...It's really something she enjoys so much. And I see N., who also really enjoys it, and it just brings almost like a light to them. Um, I know my mom, it's like a daily thing, where she is writing things down that she remembers, and she enjoys that so much, and she feels like she can contribute something to the world. To our culture (LH, learner).

The New Words Council is popular among the Elder participants, because not only do they enjoy participating, seeing each other and socializing with a regularity that does not occur frequently today, but they also feel that they are engaged in important work, that their knowledge is valued and useful in the modern world.

8.6.2 Intellectual Benefits

And it does keep us, our Elder mind active. [laughter] That's important (FP, Elder).

There are intellectual benefits to learners and elders. For learners, this is an opportunity to hear Elders talk about words, their grammatical breakdown, and see the written form. Meetings are frequently punctuated by learners asking for the literal

meaning of a word or word part, a spelling clarification, or requests for Elders to repeat word choices. A learner comments:

> I think it's a lot of fun, and to hear the Elders discussion about how to say different things, because there's many, many different ways that you can say phrases or words in Alutiiq. And it's interesting to hear the differences, but also when everybody kind of agrees on something it's just very interesting to see from a ...linguistics type of way, how words are formed, or why they use certain words for things (PA, learner).

Teaching the learners is an unforeseen benefit, that was not intended in the original project planning, but learning and mental stimulation have emerged as one of the most significant benefits of the Council.

After many years of not speaking regularly, the New Words Council has also aided Elders in remembering some of the language they have lost and learning new words and dialectical variations. They feel it keeps their minds sharp through problem solving and simply speaking to others in Alutiiq. Elders remember just a few years ago when the language program got started, how difficult it was for Elders to remember aspects of the language:

> Most of them used to have hard time, was pronouncing, you know, Alutiiq, its really hard. You know, sometimes I try to talk, certain words I just can't get them out. My head gets all...I just can't say 'em sometime. Cause I haven't been speaking (NA, Elder).

Elders notice how the project is keeping their minds active and engaged. A male speaker who often attends with his wife remembers his initial reluctance to become involved:

> I didn't want to get involved, so I, but I noticed, uh, how much dedication she had to what she was doing. She studying her homework, or her papers, bring home papers, study them, and I'd say 'What are you doing?' And at that point I decided that I probably should get involved. It was important for her so it was important for me (FC, Elder).

An Elder who occasionally comes to the New Words Council, whose fluent husband is a member, comments in their shared interview:

> (JK, Elder): I know when he, ah if I may, when he comes home from there, he always, he's always, uh, he's always telling me about some of the words, and they, you know, they talked about, and it sounds like he really enjoys it, and he'll talk about different ones, the different ideas of how to say, the different new words, and he says, some of them, you know, you just kinda say the word, what it is, like the new word, and you just kind of put the Aleut uh, ending to it., kind of…
>
> (AC, learner/staff): Mm-hmm. "Alutiicizing."
>
> (JK, Elder): "Alutiicizing."
>
> (AC, learner/staff): [laughs]
>
> (JK, Elder) – that. ..yeah, that's. mm-hmm. yes [laughs] So I know he enjoys that, very much.

(DK, Elder) – *"-aq."*

(AC, learner/staff): *"-aq,"* Yeah!

Use of the "*-aq*" is often commented on and joked about in meetings. Before the New Words Council, a common way of making a word sound more Alutiiq was to add the "*-aq*" at the end of the English word. While it is still occasionally used in the New Words Council, most participants feel we have now developed additional, more purely-Alutiiq methods for making new words. A learner comments:

> Its fun watching the Elders make the new words and the joy that comes out of it, you know, they have good time, and the interaction, and trying to make these words sound more Alutiiq than Russian, or trying to Alutiicize an American word. It's no longer just trying to put a *'aq'* at the end of a word" (L1, learner).

Another Elder discusses how she enjoys the collaborative craft of creating terms, saying, "For me its fun to just create new words with the stem of whatever the thing does. [laughs] I really enjoy that...and having all the input from everybody" (FP). Participants like to talk about the craft of word-making, to the point that participants are comfortable using shorthand in discussing word construction, such as whether to use the "*-pak*" or "*–sinaq*" word ending (both suffixes mean "big [noun]") in conjunction with a certain stem or root word to create a complete word. Grammatical discussion like this would not been as likely before the New Words Council process placed an emphasis on the meanings of various word parts.

The level of engagement by the Elders in the activity of New Words creation is evident in many meetings, where discussion will return to difficult words even after they have been tabled. This happened during the March, 2008 New Words Council meeting. When no decision could be reached on a word for a 'ski lift' or 'tram' before the meeting ended, the members continued to discuss the word over lunch. The word chosen for 'ski lift' in the following meeting was *mayuwarta* (lit. "one that climbs").

8.6.3 Connection to Culture and Identity

[O]ur Native identity... connects us to the Alutiiq community, but it also connects us to each other, the learners and the elders, who kinda have our own little group (FC, Elder).

Many of the learners on the New Words Council feel that their participation is beneficial to their identity as Alutiiq people. Many speak of social and cultural alienation that is being alleviated with their involvement in cultural activities.

> It kind of takes a lot out of a person. When you feel like you don't belong somewhere. And you kind of loose sense of who you are, and I think by learning not just the language but the culture is what I am wanting to make sure our, our younger people grasp our culture, and understand it and learn it. Is to know who they are and to know why they are who they are. And to follow our ancestors' values, which are very, very important (JK, Elder).

Some learners speak of visiting other parts of the state, where young people would introduce themselves in their Native language, and felt that there was something

missing for young Native people from Kodiak. The language has become a means for learners to have a meaningful connection to their cultural heritage. For some, the language is their preferred way of identifying as Alutiiq:

> You know, for me, you know there's a lot of people who are so creative with making masks and beading, and I was under, I could never really do that. So for me that's kind of a way to hold on to my identity, I guess (LH, learner).

For the learners, participation in Alutiiq language efforts like the New Words Council is one way, but not the only way, of connecting to their Alutiiq heritage. Because today's learners grew up not speaking the language, for them the connection between language and culture is tempered by the knowledge that so few Alutiiq people have access to the language anymore. Cultural markers such as arts, subsistence, and traditional values are also considered important aspects of Alutiiq identity (Crowell et al., 2001).

8.6.4 Healing

> *To me it's healing. This language is healing to me (NA, Elder).*

Many of the participants speak of a history of shame about the language, which is only now being lifted with the advent of language and cultural programs like the New Words Council. Many of today's New Words Council members were punished as children for speaking the language in school:

> Every time I talked Alutiiq they punish us. They hit us in the head, and they strapped our hands, and those straps, is those hip boot straps, and they got a

> buckle in the end, boy that hurt. So I was getting to where I was ashamed of my language, and my culture, and I didn't want to be involved with anything (NA, Elder).

Many of these fluent speakers became reluctant to speak, choosing to protect their children from abuse and ridicule by shifting to English. In a talking circle discussion, an Elder and learner commented:

> (FP, Elder): Even some of our own people were ashamed of our language because they were made fun of.
>
> (L1, learner): And also beaten too. And punished a lot. You hear all those stories. It's just terrible.

There is a sense, however, that this history is being left behind. There is an additional feeling that we, as participants in the New Words Council and other language revitalization projects, are part of that recovery:

> (AC, learner/staff): Do you think uh, that shame is changing now, that, now that we're doing all these programs. Do you think people feel more proud of the Alutiiq language?
>
> (KC, Elder): Well, I do. You know. I am not ashamed anymore. But like I say, I've been up and down so many times. You know, they just knock you right down. But you come back up. And I ask myself. Is this who we are? Is that how we're supposed to be? But you know we've been quiet. We were quiet people. We don't bother anybody...Like some of them always say: *Alutiit awa'i qikiiyut* to speak our language. ("Alutiiq people now are shy"). They are

> ashamed to speak our language. But you know, that's how we grew up. We have to outgrow it. You know.
>
> (AC, learner/staff): That's a good way to think of it. That we need to make some changes soon
>
> (KC, Elder): Um-hmm!

Part of the healing that is occurring is a sense of relief felt by Elders that they will not be the last ones to speak this language. Not only do they feel that they are leaving a legacy of the language to future generations, they are now being recognized and respected for their important role in saving Alutiiq, despite experiencing prejudice for being a speaker earlier in life. As one Elder proudly describes, "...They tell me, 'I am glad you're saving it.' I told them, 'Yeah, I'm glad too.' I'll do anything to save it now..." (NA, Elder). This statement came from the same Elder who described being beaten with boot straps for speaking Alutiiq at the beginning of this section.

Participants credit the variety of language projects occurring in the community with restoring cultural pride and confidence in the Elders:

> One of the things I have been fortunate to encounter, is the confidence it has instilled in our Elders, those who had, for many, many years, been stifled in speaking, and then hesitate to speak... how much more open they are with the language, and wiling to participate, but just the opportunity for them, to feel good about speaking their language in front of others (SM, learner).

Learners too feel that the language movement will have positive healing effects for their community, themselves, and their families. One learner, who commented that

she never felt whole before becoming involved with the language and culture, explained that the language program and New Words Council aided in her feeling of connectedness:

> There's personal benefits, of feeling, feeling really connected, you know, to my past, connected to my family, also being connected to the community that I live in, and learning from the Elders there, and being really connected that way, and also to the larger community of learners and speakers throughout the island (PA, learner).

8.6.5 Status and Empowerment

The issue of status and power in the division of labor has been discussed increasingly within Activity Theory (Roth & Lee, 2007; Thorne, 2004). Engeström (1999) asserts that the division of labor in an activity is both vertical and horizontal. The division of labor in an activity triangle will have horizontal planes of interaction between subjects responsible for different "tasks," as well as vertical continuums of status. Responsibilities on the horizontal plane determine what boundaries if any exist between participants' responsibilities. A vertical division based on various levels of status exists between learners, staff, elders, but these divisions are far from static. These dynamics are complicated by the researcher's position as both a staff member and learner, but it is unclear to what extent, if any, this fact has affected the process of the activity.

It is difficult to outline power differences in the New Words Council, as they are shifting and not always clear. The Elders as teachers and experts are not automatically more powerful because of their greater knowledge base and respected community role. By compiling the agenda and meeting times, providing participant stipends, and guiding the discussion with leading questions, learners can potentially affect the activity significantly. Learners also specifically remind Elders of their higher status, as a way of reinforcing cultural roles that may be obscured by responsibilities.

Elders experienced in working with other researchers on other linguistic projects tend to underestimate their agency in language activities, and are regularly reminded by learners that they are the authority to make decisions regarding the language. This was not a goal in the initial planning of the New Words Council, but as participants began conducting terminology development, they were faced with situations forcing them to examine their roles and agency within the language movement and as authorities over the language itself.

Elders on the council comment on the difficulty in making decisions about the language, and the sad fact that they do not have many other Elders they can call on for guidance. As one Elder commented on the uncomfortable role of language authority, "You know, this has to be hard" (KC, Elder). In the January 2008 meeting, when having difficulty finding a word for computer, an Elder wondered, "Who else could we ask?" (E1, Elder). A learner responded, "You guys are it" (PB, learner/staff). In October 2008, a similar interaction occurred:

(AC, learner/staff): Will any of these [choices] work for us? (asking the Elders)

(PP, Elder): Whatever you think is best.

(AC, learner/staff): No, we're leaving it up to you! (group laughter)

It is a tacit goal of learners participating on the council to remind the Elders that they are the final authorities over the language. In the March, 2008 meeting, some participants were discussing how a word under consideration might be hard for learners to say, and maybe the council should choose a shorter word. The learner running the meeting reminded them, "We don't need to do that. It's *our* language" (AC, learner/staff).

Elders even remind each other that they are the ultimate authorities. This is especially true since there are so few other fluent speakers to ask. In the January, 2008 New Words Council meeting, during a difficult discussion over a word for 'Native corporation (for-profit),' an Elder commented, "We should ask someone who *really* speaks Alutiiq" (MH, Elder). Another Elder responded teasingly, "That's *our* job!" (E1, Elder).

This focus on empowering the Elders extends beyond word approval. It also includes decisions on whether to participate in projects and other requests brought by researchers and community members. One such example occurred with a translation request from an individual at the local regional Native Association. One Elder felt uncomfortable with the politically correct "Happy Holidays" phrase, feeling it went against many Elders' Christian beliefs:

(FP, Elder): Not from me, I am not touching that...They do not allow Christ... I myself, we're trying to bring back the culture. The cultural way of living. And it has always been that we say 'Christ is born'... I for one am not going to do this."

(IC, Elder): They are not trying to separate...

(FP, Elder): They are.

(IC, Elder): Well, we're not going to argue about it...

(PB, learner/staff): It's whatever the Elders want....

(AC, learner/staff): My recommendation is that we give them whatever we want to give them, and if they don't want to use what we give them, they can use English. You guys are in control.

(FP, Elder): That's right, (AC)!

In the above passage, learners reinforced the agency of Elders by reminding them of their ability to resist requests they did not like, or provide an alternative translation more in line with their opinions on the subject.

Just as learners remind Elders of their agency, Elders show learners that their contributions are needed, and that they have a valuable knowledge to share with the council, thus bolstering learner status.

(IC, Elder): You know we have a younger generation here. How would you define?

(LH, Learner): You know it's hard. It's so hard because a computer has so many functions...It doesn't just think, you know you type, you email...The closest one is probably the first one....I don't know.

In the above interaction, the learner is uncomfortable sharing her opinion, perhaps because of her usual participation as a listener and learner. Other learners, particularly program staff are more engaged with the discussion, but they do so in specific ways that seek to prioritize Elders' knowledge (see Section 8.3.3). It is unknown as time goes on if more learners will take a more active role as they become more advanced in fluency and accustomed to the word-creation choices

8.6.6 Agency & Resistance.

We're free to speak our own and be who we are (FP, Elder).

The New Words Council has been an important piece in restoring a sense of agency to the members of the council regarding the language, modifying linguistic rules, and using the language in the community. In a number of meetings, Elders have commented that other nationalities are not afraid to speak in public, so they have been making a greater effort to do so, either at local grocery stores, or to the newspaper delivery person. As one Elder comments, "They [were] ashamed to speak our language. But you know, that's how we grew up. We have to outgrow it" (KC, Elder).

Learners downplay their own agency on the New Words Council, seeing the Elders as the true agents of word creation. They do this, in part, by stressing that the Elders are the true members of the council, while learners are there to help and

organize. The Elders tend to consider the learners as members of the committee, while the learners downplay their role, claiming to be helpers or organizers only.

> (PA, learner): Well, the um, voting members (laughs) are the Elders, you know, the fluent speakers, um, and then others from the community, the Alutiiq community are welcome to participate in, and I can't remember what the term is for [learners], like myself? We...
>
> (AC, learner/staff): Hang out (laughter)
>
> (PA, learner): Hang out, and but the voting members are the fluent speakers, or Elders.

The Elders, on the other hand, are probably more realistic in their acceptance of learners as full members, despite their different expertise. At the close of the November, 2008 meeting, an Elder asked the learner who had been coordinating the meeting, "Aren't you part of the New Words Council too?" (IC, Elder). The learner replied, "No, I'm just here to help" (PB, learner/staff).

Although the learners' continual insistence that the Elders are the members and they are just the "helpers" may seem coy, it is important to learners to show the Elders that they make the rules and they are in control, as a way of guiding their Elders away from decades of deferring to younger experts or academic authorities. Such discussions have gotten Elder participants thinking about their own roles and agency in regards to the language, even if it means establishing new innovations in speech:

> I thought it was interesting at the last one, that we had in Old Harbor, and we had [Name] there. And he said, um, you know the combining thing, they can

> do that in Hawaiian, but they just don't do it in Alutiiq. And it made me think about, well, you know, who makes those rules? Really the people who have authority over the rules of the language are all sitting around this table. And if they decide they want to combine a word, then, they'll do it [laughs] (FP, Elder).

The Elders in the New Words Council have a long and respectful relationship with their linguistic collaborators (linguists), who have adapted as the purpose of collaboration has shifted from documentation to revitalization and education. It is apparent that for whatever reason, many of the Elders now feel a sense of agency and resistance in regards to the language and its use in public. One Elder, seeing the New Words Council as a prime example of this newfound agency, states, "I think the New Words Council is a good way to take control of our language" (FP). Another Elder takes this same sentiment and considers the message sent by our efforts, stating,

> "[This sends a message] that we are very serious about what we are doing, about making sure our language continues, and that we are going to continue doing it no matter what" (JK, Elder).

Another Elder has taken his whole experience in the language movement as an inspiration to practice personal resistance to the dominant language and culture, rather than allow his previously reported feelings of cultural and linguistic shame dictate his behavior. "Now it doesn't matter to me whatever they think," he says, "I am going to speak my language " (NA, Elder).

8.7 Culturally-specific Measures of Success

It is important in an Indigenous Action Research project as well as in Activity Theory to identify what can be improved as well as what has been working well. In addition to the benefits outlined above, there are a number of areas that participants have identified to be areas for continual improvement. This does not mean that these areas have been lacking or deficient. Instead, it should be understood that these things are valued and therefore central in maintaining or increasing the success of a project like the New Words Council. These three areas are Participation, Commitment, and Continuity.

8.7.1 Participation

Anyone who has interest would be welcome to come (SM, learner).

Many of the participants, both learners and fluent speakers, make comments showing that participation, for them, is a measure of the success of the New Words Council. Participation also refers to having a wide representation (i.e. from various communities and sub-dialects) that honors the rich variations in Kodiak Alutiiq speech:

> I know we have this dual North and South thing, so I think that has been real sensitive in that those who have conducted the meetings have been very good about that. That can be an issue sometimes, and sometimes we have wound up with three different words, which is good. Which is a good way to do it. And to get their input is important (SM, learner).

Participants make a special effort to include variations in speech between villages, sub-dialects, and individual speakers by asking for confirmation from each other and occasionally holding off on decisions. In the August, 2008 meeting, no rural participants called in, which concerned Elders in Kodiak. One commented, "I would like to see the villages participate" (IC, Elder). As meeting moderator, I took responsibility for not setting up a group call-in location, saying, "I know when your are out there it can be very difficult to feel connected to Kodiak...we'll try to work harder on that." It is clear that broad participation must remain an important consideration in Kodiak new words creation.

Participation is also important in the encouragement of semi-fluent participants, as Elders see the learners on the council as the future council members. Therefore it is important to the members that these learners continue to attend, as well as recruit additional participants:

> The more we encourage people, you know, they bring their friends, you know, younger people, because Elders aren't you know, uh, you guys are going to have to end up being the Elders in time here, pretty soon (DK, Elder).

8.7.2 Commitment

That's probably the best word... commitment (SM, learner).

Many learners say they feel a sense of responsibility to the community and culture which drives their commitment to be involved. There is also a frequent mention of simply wanting to learn the language: "I wanted to learn it. And just, feeling a need

to…Of responsibility to the community to our culture, to keep it going" (PA, learner). Another learner reported the same sense of commitment on a family level:

> I don't know, I think I always felt a sense of obligation to my culture, to learn, because my mom was a Native educator, and my grandpa. So I just, I wanted to somehow be a part of that too (LH, learner).

Elders feel the commitment on a personal level, to the learners they continue to work with, and to the hoped-for future speakers they reach out to in school programs:

> …You know, they asked us to [teach]. For a while I was thinking 'A'iyaya.' And then I was thinking 'Yeah, but the kids have to know it.' As they grow up, you know. We can't loose our language. So that we could…Because mom used to tell us, 'Try to teach your kids Aleut words' (MH, Elder).

A pair of Elders remind a learner that it is important for young people get involved now, as they will become the future teachers:

> (JK, Elder): You know some day you guys are going to be the teachers. Well, you are now, but that's…
>
> (DK, Elder): It won't be long [laughs]
>
> (JK, Elder): Yeah
>
> (DK, Elder): It goes fast! [laughs]

Another Elder speaks fondly of the learners he has worked with over the years and on the New Words Council, and how it has contributed to his personal commitment to stay involved:

> And you guys were so interested. And that's what kept me going you know you guys were just, you know, I could tell when people are not really into it, but you and [SH] were really into it. That's why I got really interested after that. Anybody can learn it if they just make up their mind (NA, Elder).

This Elder's commitment to being involved and continuing to teach is encouraged by the learners who value his knowledge. His and other Elders' commitment to the learners is a dialogic process, which reinforces our commitment to each other and to the shared goal of language survival.

8.7.3 Continuity

"Everyone in the Alutiiq community universally feels that emptiness, especially when we mention that we only have 35 fluent speakers" (PB, learner).

While the participants in the New Words Council feel that the process is constructive and beneficial, there is also an awareness and urgency that this and other Alutiiq language revitalization projects must continue in order to prevent the death of the language. Participants are pleased with the successes of recent efforts, but the worry never goes away that today's efforts might not last. As one learner says, "I want to keep that going. I want to make it into something more positive, and more…I'd hate to see it die" (LH, learner).

Those current participants who were involved in past short-lived programs worry about the continuity of the program based on past experience:

> And I remember before...when that bits and pieces of the language started, and little pocket here and pocket there. And then it disappeared. And you still felt good, but there was still, kind of like an empty [feeling]. 'Now it's done and now what?' kind of...You're out there...you wanna have it, but where do you go for it? (SM, learner).

The participants have put significant amounts of personal effort and time into the New Words Council and other language projects, and they do not want their efforts to be in vain.

A factor in aiding the New Words Council's continuity may be its continual usefulness to the language movement. Participants feel that as language revitalization moves forward, the need for the words will only increase. As one Elder urges, "I hope you are able to continue it year after year, because we've got a long ways to go yet" (JK, Elder). Another Elder adds, "It really needs to continue...because there's always going to be new things to say" (DK, Elder). There may be only a small group of learners at present who are using the newly-created words, but they anticipate more in the future. As one Elder describes, he is happy that there is now a process in place that will outlive his generation:

> Before we wouldn't say it in Alutiiq because we had no word for it, so we would just say it in English. That's the only way we understood it, but now I could understand what they're talking about. I think it's gonna be helpful for the younger generation like you. Then you guys will be using it all, after everything is done (NA, Elder).

When today's speakers are gone, and tomorrow's speakers are here, our words will be there for them to speak. As new technologies emerge, new words will be needed, but the future New Words Council members will have the knowledge of how to make the words taught to them by today's Elders. It is vitally important to foster continuity in the New Words Council and other language revitalization projects so that each generation can build upon the contributions of the current generations' efforts.

8.8 Conclusion

This section has focused on my third research question, which is: how can the New Words Council meet the needs of its participants and implement ongoing strategies for improvement and community transformation? I have found that transformation informs the New Words Council on many levels: change over time, innovation within the council's activity, as well as transformation at the level of linguistic and community survival for the Kodiak Alutiiq community. In exploration of the concept of transformation, I have placed the activity of the New Words Council on a historic course of language revitalization, which is complicated by obstructions and innovations as participants and organizers strive for improvement. I have explored the Activity Theory concept of mediation, which participants employ to achieve their goals. Finally, I use Constructivist Grounded Theory to extend the construct of transformation beyond the scope of conventional Activity Theory. This has enabled me to identify community-specific definitions of success, and explain the

stated and emergent objectives and benefits of the New Words Council's activity as described by participants.

Chapter 9:

Conclusions and Discussion

9.1 Introduction

As an example of heritage revitalization, the New Words Council shares certain goals and motivations that drive other Indigenous cultural movements – a focus on self-determination, self-representation, and community survival. This is achieved through conscious revitalization of cultural forms. Some academics have criticized this type of movement, claiming that revitalization of heritage and language results in an 'invented' cultural form, fundamentally changed from the original, and disconnected from an authentic cultural heritage (Hanson, 1989; Keesing, 1989; Mason, 1996). I refer to this type of scholarship as 'Invention of Tradition' or 'Invention' scholarship. A fuller discussion of 'Invention of Tradition' scholarship is found in Chapter 3 of this study.

This concluding chapter places the New Words Council at the center of debates over heritage revitalization, confronting academic critiques of language and cultural revitalization movements. It argues for a contextualized understanding of heritage revitalization efforts like the New Words Council in terms that Indigenous groups and the academy can support. This perspective accepts the created-ness of certain cultural forms – like new words – without delegitimization, and without endangering Indigenous struggles for self-determination and representational authority. This chapter describes how, as an example of heritage revitalization, the

New Words Council: 1) is a denial of acculturation rather than performance; 2) is an activity defined by tradition and innovation; and 3) is an effort of resistance and community survival. These findings on heritage revitalization offer a level of representational authority to Indigenous groups themselves, who have a right to contribute to the academic and political discourse on equal terms with other representations. Representational authority is a key tenet of Indigenous Action Research, which I return to in Section 9.5, Discussion and Implications. In the Conclusion, Section 9.6, I offer a metaphor for Alutiiq language revitalization – the *angyaq* ("open skin boat"), which brings together many of the discussions and findings of this study in a way that is culturally relevant and focused on the future.

9.2 Heritage Revitalization is Denial of Acculturation rather than Performance

While some anthropologists describe Alutiiq heritage revitalization as an outward-looking pursuit for "legitimacy" from the dominant culture (Mason, 1996), Alutiiq participants on the New Words Council describe it as an inward-looking effort to heal and strengthen the community and culture – a denial of acculturation. When asked what 'others' might think of what we are doing, the response is often indifferent or unconcerned with outside perceptions:

> (AC, learner/staff): …When I tell non-Native people what we're doing, sometimes they're like, 'huh.'
>
> (MH, Elder): *Aa'i!* [shaking head]
>
> (AC, learner/staff): Because they can't imagine doing it for English.

(MH, Elder): Don't worry about them! [laughs]

(AC, learner/staff): [laughs]

(MH, Elder): They have their own different languages too. We don't understand them.

(AC, learner/staff): [laughs] that's true.

Participants feel that we are doing what needs to be done, and if others don't understand, then it will not change their efforts. The opinion of Alutiiq participants in the New Words Council is that while skeptical representations may be misinformed or hurtful, they do not change the underlying need and drive within the community for restoration of cultural and linguistic self-determination.

> ...Unfortunately the rapidity of change that happens, as cultures clash, as American culture becomes more and more pervasive, our culture has been suppressed, and so we have to, battle against that suppression, by creating opportunities for people to live it... And so, I think that it is a totally valid way of continuing the culture and helping people grow with it...Culture changes. And our language has to change with the times (AD, learner).

There is a tension between not caring what others think and a need for wider community, State, and National support and funding to maintain programs. Critiques of heritage revitalization often include discussions of funding, and assumptions about the influence that funders – federal, state, and corporate – may have on the authenticity or legitimacy of heritage projects (Dombrowsky, 2002, 2004; Mason, 1996). These critiques rely on the assumption that communities that accept funding

will promote the messages and the political will of their sponsors without resistance, and that the "elite" (i.e. educated and/or employed) Natives participating in these efforts will invariably work against the interests of the "silent majority" (i.e., their uneducated, impoverished, more "traditional" cousins) (Dombrowsky, 2004; Keesing, 1991; Lee & Graeburn, 2003). These assumptions do a disservice to Native communities that have long proven themselves capable of agency and opposition of acculturation through heritage revitalization. The accusation that elite community members partner with, or parrot the will of funding agencies against the interests of their own people is a continuation of imperialist attitudes that deny even educated Native people the authority to speak about their own cultures.

Funding and politics consistently come into play in heritage revitalization, because such efforts simultaneously take place in a "local and global constellation of forces" (Clifford, 2004, p. 14). Even participants in rural Alaskan villages are aware of the larger context of their efforts. They are aware that similar efforts are being conducted or considered by other Indigenous communities. The new words creation effort on Kodiak is not happening in a vacuum. Participants feel that what we are doing has significance for other Indigenous revitalization groups:

(AC, learner/staff): So what we're doing is-

(FP, Elder) Breaking ground.

(AC, learner/staff): Yeah, I think it's important.

(FP, Elder): Yeah they can use us as a model group! [laughter]

For many of the participants in the New Words Council, it is a point of pride to see that we use unique and innovative methods of language revitalization, and it is hoped that these activities will benefit others. In doing so, New Words Council participants hope to ensure the modern survival of our language.

9.3 Heritage Revitalization is an Activity Defined by Tradition and Innovation

As discussed in Section 3.4 all tradition is "invented," as it changes over time along with cultural change (Handler & Linnekin, 1984). While some academics have focused on *what* is invented in Native cultures, others, including Indigenous and Non-Indigenous scholars have offered more nuanced studies of *how* and *why* cultures seek to revitalize, reassert and reimagine their group identity, while respecting each Indigenous community's ownership of their own cultural heritage (Briggs, 1996; Trask, 1991). Ultimately in this study, the definition of tradition for the New Words Council is based on participants' own perceptions of a connection to a historical past – to linguistic forms understood by today's fluent speakers and used by the parents and grandparents of today's generations.

A connection to a cultural past is important to participants and communities engaged in heritage revitalization (Briggs, 1996; Clifford, 2004; Romero-Little, 2006). Such a connection is important to Alutiiq people, although the ways Indigenous people think of tradition may differ from the Western academic definitions some scholars have used (Wong, 1999). New Words efforts, because of their transformative and

innovative nature, are conspicuous in their invented-ness – both in practice and product.

While it may be difficult to determine in some cases whether revitalized cultural forms have a historical root, nobody – including members of the New Words Council – believes that formalized terminology development is part of traditional Alutiiq cultural heritage. All languages create new words, either through loan-translations or coining of terms. The difference with efforts like the Kodiak New Words Council is the formalized process and intentionality. Thus, new words creation – and potentially other forms of cultural renewal – is both traditional and innovative.

Participants in many Indigenous terminology development efforts feel that the methods used to make new words should be based, at least partially, on traditional linguistic forms (Warner et al., 2007; Wong, 1999). This concern is present in the Kodiak New Words Council. As a participant in the New Words Council contends:

> And so new words *do* need to be created, in as close a way within the traditional concept of the world, or worldview as possible, but they have to be created, so we can continue to communicate with each other about what matters, and what's happening in our lives (AD, learner).

This opinion that a new tradition of new words needs to be created, but the technique of creating new words needs to be based on accepted traditional forms, is echoed by an Elder, who says, "It's important to know, or make up, use those words with an Alutiiq flair, so that we can understand them, and blend it in the, the Alutiiq language" (JK, Elder). A linguistic analysis of the actual words created by the New Words

Council goes beyond the scope of this project, but it is clear that a connection to traditional or historically inspired creation methods are considered important to participants.

Such discourse on "traditional methods" brings up the question of the existence of tradition in an activity defined by innovation. As there was no formalized word creation effort before a few years ago the Kodiak New Words Council can be seen as un-traditional. However, I contend that the definition of "traditional" should be defined by the Alutiiq community, as current practice will determine what becomes tradition for future generations. As stated by Wong (1999) :

> Although the concept of tradition is nebulous and provides an unstable foundation upon which to build a case for the authenticity of language forms, it is nonetheless an important factor in the minds of those participating in revitalization efforts (p. 103).

If there is a commitment to linguistic forms the community feels are traditional, the long-term acceptance of new terms will be augmented, and internal critiques of terminology development will be reduced (Wong, 1999). In new words contexts, time will tell if these terms will become part of the permanent lexicon. As Wong (1999) predicts in her analysis of the Hawaiian new words effort, despite internal critiques and methodological discussions, the terms selected by the Lexicon Committee "will eventually become tradition" (p. 104). In the case of the Kodiak New Words Council, what today's Elders determine to be traditional will be picked up by future word creators.

9.4 Heritage Revitalization an Effort of Resistance and Community Survival

Heritage revitalization is characterized by resistance to injustice and colonialism, and a focus on community survival. As discussed in Section 3.2 of this study, heritage revitalization efforts occur in sociopolitical contexts in which communities are fighting back against colonialism, or are in the process of reconstituting and reconstructing a historically damaged language, cultural practice, or identity (Clifford, 2004; Suina, 2004).

> They took away something from us, which was taking away part of us, part of our life, part of our being. And they need to encourage and understand that we want to get that back. And it's not a frivolous thing. It's a very important part of what we need to make ourselves feel good and connected with who we are (JK, Elder).

Asserting a cultural identity in a society focused on homogeneity is an act of resistance. Further, for Native cultures like the Alutiiq, long thought to be acculturated or unaware of their heritage (Pullar, 1992), such assertion can be politically powerful. "For Indigenous people, long marginalized or made to disappear, physically and ideologically, to say 'We exist' in performances and publications is a powerful political act" (Clifford, 2004, p. 9).

Resistance on the New Words Council also includes subversive use of modern technology and ideas to fit Alutiiq needs, and a rejection of past perceptions of Alutiiq culture as being lost or obsolete. As one participant in the New Words Council states:

> I think the New Words Council gives a message. That we are not a dead or dying culture. That we are progressive and innovative. Because even when the Russians came, our people adopted stuff they brought and made it to fit their own needs. And we are in the process of doing that now, in this day and age. And I think it sends a message that our language is critical and vital and important. And it sends a message that we are a part of this world. We are embracing what is happening and using it to fit how we are, rather than just adapting (L1, learner).

Alutiiq people assert the right to be a part of the world while remaining Alutiiq. The message sent by activities like the New Words Council is that Alutiiq tribal members will continue to exist in a modern context, but will do so in Alutiiq ways, using non-Alutiiq tools to accomplish community-specific aims.

Community survival for Indigenous groups is not just about physical survival. It represents perpetuation of community, and the right for Native people to resist acculturation (Brayboy, 2006; Lomawaima & McCarty, 2002; McCarty et al., 2006). The New Words Council is part of this effort, because the ability to speak to each other without having to revert to English reinforces the boundedness and perpetuation of community. As Alutiiq scholar Gordon Pullar (Pullar, 1992) comments:

> A movement is underway that may guarantee the survival of Alutiiqs as a distinct people. We have an opportunity to shape our cultural futures. We must always keep in mind, however, that cultural revitalization is a process, and not

an event. This process, to be truly successful, must continue for generations (p. 189).

9.5 Discussion and Implications

This study offers several discussions with implications for heritage revitalization and language revitalization research, terminology development efforts, and research in Indigenous communities. I have proposed a new formulation of Action Research called Indigenous Action Research, that incorporates Indigenous epistemologies and research theories into a methodology driven by participants and emphasizing positive transformation, while also supporting goals of sovereignty and community survival. Prioritization of participant voices and understandings, as well as local relevance, are key requirements of Indigenous Action Research projects. Indigenous Action Research may provide one means for Indigenous researchers like myself to navigate the multiple roles and responsibilities we face in addressing academic as well as community concerns.

This research has provided an alternative to past studies of revitalization and heritage movements that focused on authenticity and 'inventedness,' instead focusing attention on the reasons for and importance of these movements to community members themselves. This representation is aligned with Indigenous Action Research's requirements for participant agency and support of community survival. Furthermore, the claims in this study are supported by empirical evidence from multiple sources of data. Refocusing the attention on heritage movements in this

manner has the added benefit of countering past imperialist attitudes towards Indigenous groups' social movements, and returns representational authority to Indigenous communities.

This study is an assertion of Alutiiq self-representation. We are in a new era of Indigenous research and representation, where scholars can expect that the communities they write about will have access to what has been written about them, and a voice to comment on research quality. Stronger standards are being enacted, with higher expectations placed on researchers to document the quality and have it approved by site-based entities. No longer can researchers expect that their audience is limited to academia, or that it will not contain a member of their research site. This is the site of a new opportunity for meaningful dialogue, where multivocality replaces the single voice of authority, and Indigenous scholars and groups are a meaningful part of the discourse (Clifford, 2004).

In matters of Indigenous representation such as this study on the Kodiak New Words Council, it is common knowledge now that all sides have a position – there is "more than one truth" (Crowell et al., 2001). Recognizing this, our audience seeks a "negotiated truth" (Hill, 2000, p. 105), where various perspectives are honored, and collaborative dialogue allows for meaningful and respectful discussion of our cultural heritage.

9.6 Conclusion: The *Angyaq* ("open skin boat") of Alutiiq Language Revitalization

I conclude this study with a metaphor relevant to the community language effort. In community-oriented research projects like this, it can be beneficial to present a symbol, story, or metaphor to aid in the description of findings – especially for Indigenous communities where these types of communication are a traditional form of learning (S. Wilson, 2008). Like the "Indian Car" metaphor used by Christine Sims (2008) for Native American language revitalization (See Chapter 6), the Alutiiq language movement also needs a culturally relevant image to illustrate the findings presented in this study.

The *angyaq* metaphor is an apt choice for representing the Alutiiq language movement, both for its history – which is reminiscent of the history of the language, and because of its functional characteristics. It is a symbol of what was taken from the Alutiiq Nation during the centuries-long process of colonization, but also an inspiration for the recovery of Alutiiq cultural heritage and self-determination.

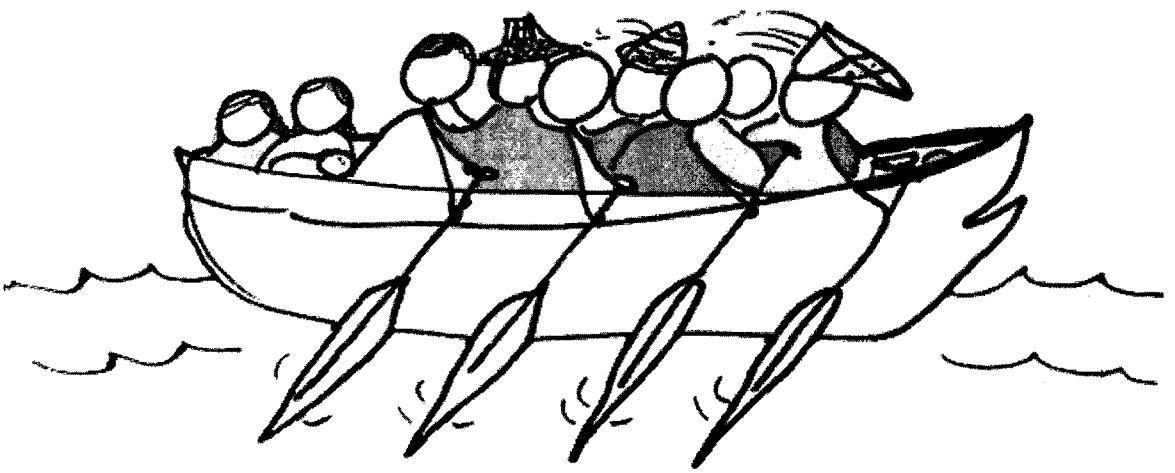

Fig. 9.1 *Angyaq* (open skin boat). Metaphor for Alutiiq Language Revitalization

The Alutiiq, Unangan, Central Yup'ik and Inupiaq regions of coastal Alaska are well-known for their use of the *qayaq* ("kayak"). The *qayaq* had a larger counterpart in the Alutiiq region, known as the *angyaq*. Similar to the "umiaq" used by the Yup'ik and Inupiaq Peoples, the *angyaq* had specific environmental adaptations for the stormy Southern Alaskan coast, such as a split prow for lifting over oncoming waves (Crowell & Laktonen, 2001). It was a large, open boat 25 to 40 feet in length, capable of holding 20 paddlers along with other passengers and gear (Haakanson, 2010; Steffian & Counceller, 2007). Used for trading, warfare, and group travel, the light, flexible *angyaq* also doubled as a travel shelter when positioned upside down on the beach (Crowell & Laktonen, 2001).

This technology was unfamiliar to the early explorers to Kodiak, who were discomforted by the *angyaq*'s structural flexibility (particularly in high seas), but recognized its value along the archipelago's dangerous coastlines, where a European-style vessel might flounder or swamp (Crowell & Laktonen, 2001). Early in the colonization process, Russian fur traders confiscated these crafts, using some for their own transportation needs. The biggest reason the *angyaq* was outlawed, however, was the Russians' knowledge that without large boats, "it was difficult for villagers to gather, flee subjugation, or mobilize attacks" (Steffian & Counceller, 2007). Native communities' means of travel, resistance, and escape were severely hampered, and the art of *angyaq* building was lost completely by the late 19th Century (Crowell & Laktonen, 2001; Haakanson, 2010; Steffian & Counceller, 2007).

The Alutiiq language has not yet been lost, but the language was suppressed during colonization as something dangerous to the dominant culture. Russian settlers did not see Alutiiq language as a threat to Russian interests, and did not actively discourage Alutiiq speech, instead allowing multilingualism. During later American rule and the mission school era, the language was discouraged and suppressed (Crowell et al., 2001). While the *angyaq* represented physical resistance to Russian domination, the Alutiiq language, as one of the few surviving aspects of traditional culture, represented psychological resistance to American policies of acculturation. By the mid 20th Century the Alutiiq language was in active decline (Counceller & Leer, 2006). It wasn't until the culture and heritage movement on Kodiak spread to revitalization of linguistic heritage that the course towards obsolescence was altered.

Like the *angyaq*, the Alutiiq language is a symbol of the healing and self-determination of Alutiiq communities. The revitalization movement is like an *angyaq* in that it is a means of transporting the entire community – not just those actively involved in language revitalization, but also families and future learners – towards a common destination. Furthermore, like the *angyaq* boat building technology, our language and its revitalization are culturally and historically specific to Kodiak, even though other models of revitalization are available. The language movement does not exist in isolation (from other efforts or cultures), but it must be judged and guided by its own culturally determined measures of success.

Just as in the Activity Theory triangle, there is a division of labor within the *angyaq*. The young people and learners provide the paddling power to carry our

Alutiiq community towards the goal of a stronger language and culture. The Elders help chart the course, providing the guidance and knowledge needed to accomplish the task. With us, we carry the tools we will need to help reach our destination – whether they are modern technologies or relationships and cultural protocols to improve our success.

The *angyaq*, as a 'moving metaphor,' is especially applicable to the Alutiiq language revitalization movement and on a smaller scale, the New Words Council, because they are both working towards a goal of language revitalization. Other culturally-relevant images may not be as appropriate, without the inherent quality of mobility – after all, it is referred to as the language and culture *movement*. The mobility of the *angyaq* relates to the positive change and transformation hoped for by participants. We wish to move, as a community, from the shame and alienation caused by culture and language suppression, to a future where we are unquestionably in control of our own linguistic destiny.

A limitation of the *angyaq* metaphor is that the craft of *angyaq*-making has not yet been recovered. No full-sized *angyat* (the plural form of *angyaq*) from the historical period are known to exist. *Angyaq* model making workshops are being planned for the Alutiiq Museum's Traveling Traditions project in Kodiak rural schools in 2011, but it may be some time before the creation of a full-sized model. Even then, the use of the *angyaq* would primarily be symbolic. Thankfully, the language did not completely die out before the current revitalization efforts began. However, like a resurrected *angyaq*, it is known that the modern use of the language will never be the

same as its original function – that of every day communication in all aspects of life. This does not diminish the drive for the Alutiiq community to recapture this aspect of its heritage. The Alutiiq language is more important than its functional use in communication, just as the *angyaq* represents more than just a means of traveling to the next village.

The revitalization of Alutiiq language, in part through efforts like the Kodiak New Words Council, is a part of a heritage revitalization movement that is concerned with resistance, self-determination, and community survival. These efforts are innovative, but also characterized by a desire to maintain traditional forms. Instead of being an outward looking pursuit of legitimacy, these efforts are inward looking, focused on community perpetuation in an increasingly globalized world.

Appendix A: Master New Words List. September 2007 – October 2010

English:	Alutiiq Word:	Literal translation	Notes:	Date:
Telephone	Niuwasuun (suuteq)	thing for talking		1/29/08
Linguist	Niuwaciligaarta	one who works with words		1/29/08
Language	Niuwaciq/Yuuwaciq		remembered/reaffirmed	1/29/08
Moose	Tunturpak	big deer		1/29/08
Elk	Cirunertuliq	one with big antlers		1/29/08
Class	Litnaurwik	place to learn		1/29/08
Television	Ulutegwik	thing to look at		1/29/08
To call	Niu'uqur-/yuu'urqur-	to call out to someone	new use of an existing verb	1/29/08
Mountain goat	Pehnaiq		adoption of Chugach word	1/29/08
rent	nall'iryarauluku			2/28/08
rental (place)	nall'iryarausqaq	one you have to pay		2/28/08
typewriter	igarsuun	thing to write with	remembered. Also same word could be used for a writing implement like a pen.	2/28/08
orange(fruit)	uuRincaaq/ uuRinciiq		Alutiicized English	2/28/08
Anchorage	Kicarwik	place to anchor	same word is used by Yup'ik speakers	2/28/08
stapler	kalikat tupirsuutiit	papers' fastener		2/28/08
pencil holder	kaRantaasaat tuumiaq'stiit	pencils' holder		2/28/08
keyboard	niugneret puukicaa'it	the words' buttons		2/28/08
circle	akagngasqaq	round thing		2/28/08
oval	akagnganguasqaq	something that is kind of round		2/28/08
writings	igaumasqat	things that are written down		3/17/08
computer	umiartusqaq	thing that thinks	some speakers use umiartusqaq masiinaruaq, "a kind of machine that thinks"	3/17/08
corporation - non-profit	ikayutengnaq'sqat	ones that are trying to help each other		3/17/08
orange (color)	uuRingciirngasqaq	thing the color of an orange		3/17/08
purple (color)	cuawagnguasqaq	thing like the color of a blueberry		3/17/08
copy machine	picirtaa'ista	one that gets		3/17/08
corporation-profit	akilingnaq'sqat	ones that are trying to make money		4/29/08
corporation-profit	akisuangnaq'sqat	ones searching for money		4/29/08
taxi	nall'iryarausqaq kaaRaq	car you have to pay		4/29/08
porch	llaat'ruaq	kind of thing outside		4/29/08
snow plow	qanisuun	thing for fallen snow		4/29/08
credit card	akiilngum kaaR'taa'a	bill's cards		4/29/08
credit card	akilngumsuuta* kaaR'taa'a	bills' cards	*the spelling of this word cannot be verified at this time	4/29/08
ketchup	tumatuusaaruaq	kind of like canned tomatoes	Alutiicized English (tomato sauce)	4/29/08

If variants are village/sub-dialectical rather than individual speaker preference, they are identified with abbreviations for village or north/south Kodiak Island in parenthesis.

English:	Alutiiq Word:	Literal translation	Notes:	Date:
ski lift/tram	mayuwarta	one that climbs		4/29/08
moving sidewalk	kuingcarait'sqaq	one where you don't have to walk		4/29/08
New Words Council	Nuta'at Niugnelistet	New Word Makers		4/29/08
home/village	elwigpet	the place we live	elwik would be the non possessed form, meaning "living place"	4/29/08
home/village	enwigpet	the place we live		4/29/08
step stool	tugw'ik	step on place		6/25/08
step ladder	tugw'it	stepping thing, multiple steps		6/25/08
a recording	niugneret ang'asuutiit	holder of words		6/25/08
high school	qus'isqaq skoluq (n) / qus'isqaq litnaurwik (s)	the high learning place		6/25/08
college	qus'isqarpiaq skoluq (n) / qus'ingrusqaq litnaurwik (s)	school that is higher than		6/25/08
table it (action)	keluwarlluku	to put it aside		8/18/08
Korean person	KuRiyanaq		Alutiicized English	8/18/08
email	Cukasqaq kaliqaq	fast paper		8/18/08
computer disks, etc.	umiartusqam ang'asuutii	computer's storage		8/18/08
barista	kofialista (n) / kuugialista/kuufialista (n/s)	coffee maker		8/18/08
museum	culia'at elwiat (n) / cuumillallret egwiat (s)	things from past, where they stay		8/18/08
crane	qulwart'suuteq	thing that raises		8/18/08
escalator	tRaapat p'tasqat	steps that move		8/18/08
elevator	qulwarwik	lifting place		8/18/08
glass/fake eye	iingalaruaq	fake eye	to some this could also mean a contact lens	8/18/08
contact lenses (dual)	iingalak ackiirua'ak	the eyes' kind of glasses (dual)		9/12/08
microwave	cuskasqaq kenirwik	fast cooking place		9/12/08
City	sugyasqaq	one with lots of people		9/12/08
New York	Nutaa'aq YoRkaaq	new "York"	partial Alutiicized English	9/12/08
squid	amikuruaq (n) / utguiruaq (s)	kind of octopus		9/12/08
toaster	lliipam kuamanguarsutii	bread's sort of burner		9/12/08
toaster	glEpam kuamanguarsutii	bread's sort of burner	another word for toaster was chosen at a later meeting	9/12/08
power sander	stRuusarsuun /-suuteq	thing for planing	based on stRuusaq (planer) which is an existing Alutiicized Russian word	9/12/08
power drill	ukilisuun	thing for making holes		9/12/08
power drill	ukisqasuun	thing for making holes	may have double meaning.	9/12/08
crock pot	cukailnguq asuq	slow pot		9/12/08
electric skillet	skuuRutaruaq	sort of frying pan		9/12/08
toaster oven	tug'awingcuk	little oven		9/12/08

If variants are village/sub-dialectical rather than individual speaker preference, they are identified with abbreviations for village or north/south Kodiak Island in parenthesis.

English:	Alutiiq Word:	Literal translation	Notes:	Date:
electric mixer	akuut'suuteq	thing you mix with		9/12/08
sunhat	macam slaapaa/sliapaa/sapga	the sun's hat		12/15/08
sunhat	macami slaapaa/sliapaa/sapga	hat (for) in the sun		12/15/08
mechanical/electric saw	mengqurtusqaq pilaq	loud, noisy saw	jig, chain, band saw, etc.	12/15/08
waffle maker	haatkiirualisuun	sort of" hot cake" maker		12/15/08
dremmel tool	dRiimalaq		Alutiicized English	12/15/08
tv dinner	keniryarailngut	they don't need to be cooked		12/15/08
tooth paste	Guutet miilarua'at	the teeth's soap		12/15/08
sunglasses	Macarsuutek	something for the sun, dual	may have been already in use	12/15/08
Internet	Iwa'isuuteq	the searcher		12/15/08
Vice President	Pris'itin'taam angasua/angayua	the President's partner		12/15/08
Election	Piugcikengan	the one that you want		12/15/08
Ballot	ceterwik / seterwik (n)	place to mark		2/17/09
vote	Pingak'gkengan cetrluku	the one you like, mark it		2/17/09
New Year's Day	Snuuwikuutaq / Nuuwikuutaq		remembered, Alutiicized Russian. "Snuuwikuutam" used as a greeting on New Years.	2/17/09
New Year's Eve	(S)nuuwikuutam Maqinra		remembered, Alutiicized Russian, plus maqinera, meaning "the eve of (holiday/holy day)"	2/17/09
Russian Christmas Eve	ARusistuam Maqinra / Rosistuam Maqinra		remembered, Russian base, plus maqinera, meaning "the eve of (holiday/holy day)"	2/17/09
Russian Christmas	Rosistuaq (n) / ARusistuaq (s)		remembered, Alutiicized Russian	2/17/09
American Christmas	KRiismaq		Alutiicized English	2/17/09
Christmas Eve	Rosistuam Maqinra (Afog.) / ARusistuam Maqinra		remembered, Alutiicized Russian, plus maqinera, meaning "the eve of (holiday/holy day)"	2/17/09
Russian New Years Eve	Snuuwikuutam Maqinra		remembered, Alutiicized Russian, plus maqinera, meaning "the eve of (holiday/holy day)"	2/17/09

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English:	Alutiiq Word:	Literal translation	Notes:	Date:
Russian New Year	Snuuwikuutaq		remembered, Alutiicized Russian	2/17/09
Shapes	Canamacaat	things that are made		2/17/09
crib	Carliam englengcua	baby's little bed		2/17/09
Roof	Englum qainga / Unglum qainga	house's top		2/17/09
Toothbrush	Guutet sugsuutait/tiit	teeth scrubber		2/17/09
Russian Easter	Paas'kaaq	American Easter		2/17/09
Father's Day	Atam Ernera			2/17/09
Mother's Day	Aanam Ernera			2/17/09
Independence Day	Kasnaam Ernera	Government's Day		2/17/09
Labor Day	Pekt'sqat Ernerat	Workers' Day		2/17/09
Benny Benson Day	Benny Benson-rem Ernera	alternative to Columbus Day		2/17/09
Veteran's Day	Anguyartaallret Ernera	Those who used to war's day		2/17/09
St. Patricks Day	Puksuk Erneq	Pinching Day		2/26/09
Halloween	Giinaruat Ernerat	Masks' Day		2/26/09
pork/ham	Sitiin'kam kemga	pig's meat		2/26/09
Alutiiq language Office	Alutiit'stun litnauwirwik / Alutiit'stun Litnauwiwik	Alutiiq language teaching place		2/26/09
Valentine's Day	Unguwatem Ernera	Heart's Day		2/26/09
sledge hammer	Mulut'uusinaq / MuRut'uusinaq	big hammer	existing Alutiicized Russian word, plus Alutiiq suffix sinaq (big)	2/26/09
mallet (small)	Mulut'uungcuk / MuRut'uungcuk	little hammer	existing Alutiicized Russian word, plus Alutiiq suffix -ngcuk (small)	2/26/09
Memorial Day	Anguyallret Enqaruarluki	"remembering the warriors"		2/26/09
battery	baat'Riiq		Alutiicized English	5/8/09
restaurant	Nerwik	Place to eat	Can be blanket term	5/8/09
cafeteria	Nerwiguaq	kind of a restaurant/place to eat		5/8/09
waiter/waitress	Tait'sta / Tait'steq	One who brings	Server at a restaurant	5/8/09
chocolate	Cak'alataq		Alutiicized English	5/8/09
Mushroom	Slaaparaaq		modification of existing Alutiicized Russian word for hat. Old Word: Aningua'arnaq	5/8/09
Sausage Links	Kemeglit		based on word for meat - kemek	5/8/09
Hawaii	Hawa'iq		Alutiicized Hawaiian	5/8/09
doorknob	amii'im agaa / amiigem agaa / Ruuc'kaaq (N)	door's handle	remembered	5/8/09
shot	Kaputeq		remembered	6/25/09
needle	Mingqun/ Mingquteq		remembered	6/25/09
pressure points	Caugngaq		remembered	6/25/09
acupressure (Alutiiq style)	Caugngarluku		remembered	6/25/09
blood letting	Taqiluni		remembered	6/25/09

If variants are village/sub-dialectical rather than individiual speaker preference, they are identified with abbreviations for village or north/south Kodiak Island in parenthesis.

English:	Alutiiq Word:	Literal translation	Notes:	Date:
horn used in blood letting	Melutaq		remembered	6/25/09
sprained ankle	Quuquuwariiyuq		remembered	6/25/09
Green salmon berries	urungilet		remembered	6/25/09
toaster	glEpam legt'suutii (N) / Iliipam legt'suutii (S)	bread's crisper		6/25/09
bicycle	Pis'iklEtaq (N) / Pis'ikliitaq (S)		remembered, Alutiicized English	6/25/09
airplane pilot	tengausqam nunalga	airplane's captain		6/25/09
sunglasses	macarsuutek	things (2) for the sun	remembered	6/25/09
bra	aamarsuut'ruak	things for the breasts	remembered	6/25/09
highliner	Pit'nertusqaq	"one who habitually gets a lot"		6/25/09
electric thing	Naniyarqaasqaq	will be used with many words		6/25/09
Milkshake	muluk'uuruaq	kind of milk	some may use this word for artificial creamer or milk	6/25/09
Wheelchair	Cinguruasqaq stuulciik	kind of pushing chair	remembered	6/25/09
Fairbanks	Cenk'gt'sqaq	"Nice banks"		6/25/09
Tanana	Tan'anaq		Alutiicizeed English/Athabaskan	6/25/09
bank	akirwik	money place	remembered	8/20/09
noodles/pasta	mak'aRunat		remembered, Aluuticized English	8/20/09
Motorcycle	masiinakliitaq	combination of machine and bicycle		8/20/09
rat	ugna'arpak	big mouse/vole		8/20/09
cockroach	parutuyuguaq	kind of like a type of beetle		8/20/09
pigeon	qulupiaruaq	like a dove		8/20/09
sun hat	tunguhnaillquutaq saapek	Hat that keeps you from being sun tanned/burned		8/20/09
Ice cream	kumlasngasqaq muluk'uuq / kumlasngasqaq muRuk'uuq	frozen milk		9/24/09
Breast pump	amam puumpaa'a	breast's pumper		9/24/09
Flight Attendant	tengausqam ikayurtii	plane's helper		9/24/09
birth control pills	pilulit qumin'irsuutet	no pregnancy pills		9/24/09
Tofu	ciisaruaq	kind of like cheese	modified existing Alutiicized English word	9/24/09
Sushi	qasaruat	kind of like raw foods (plural)		9/24/09
pasta	mak'aRunaruat	like macaroni	used for all pasta except macaroni	9/24/09
4-wheeleer/ATV	masiinakliitarpak	big motorcycle	modified previous new word	9/24/09
pain reliever/Tylenol	ilangart'suuteq	thing for feeling better		9/24/09
ATM	akirsurwik	place to get money		9/24/09
Satellite	tanqilek		based on word for light	9/24/09
plastic	stikluuruaq	kind of like glass		9/24/09
wart	utnguq		remembered	9/24/09
propeller	cakgwiq		remembered	9/24/09

If variants are village/sub-dialectical rather than individiual speaker preference, they are identified with abbreviations for village or north/south Kodiak Island in parenthesis.

English:	Alutiiq Word:	Literal translation	Notes:	Date:
vaccinate someone	usparluku		remembered. Also means to weigh it or meaure it.	9/24/09
pizza	asiruangia'aq / asgiruangia'aq	very nice flat (unleavened) bread		11/5/09
accupuncture	kapursuutet / kaputasuutet*	things for poking	*spelling for this variant cannot be confirmed at this time	11/5/09
sexually transmitted infection/disease	STD-iq		Alutiicized English acronym	11/5/09
condom	aRaparuaq	like a boot		11/5/09
vitamin	canangaitsuutet	things for wellness		11/5/09
junk food	caqaillranek* neqet	food of junk	*the spelling of this word cannot be verified at this time. A possible correct spelling is caqillret.	11/5/09
artist	munarta'ista	one who is good at crafts		11/5/09
headache medicine	nasqulngunaisuuteq	thing for no headache		11/5/09
willow tree	nimruyaq		remembered	11/5/09
rose (wild)	cipoiniik		remembered	11/5/09
hose	hosaq		affirmed new word already in use, Alutiicized English	12/3/09
sprinkler	ciqilarsuun	thing for sprinkling		12/3/09
windmill/turbine	cakgwigpak	big propeller		12/3/09
ice cleats	llurarnisuutek*	things for not sliding	*the spelling of this word cannot be verified at this time.	12/3/09
actor (profession)	maaskartumasqaq	one who wears masks	masks used literally and figuratively	12/3/09
lawnmower	weg'et kepsuutiit	grass' cutter		12/3/09
snack (verb)	miluqarluni		remembered (MH)	
hors deurves	milurquruat	"kind of things you throw"	remembered (FP), reaffirmed	12/3/09
neq'rqaruat	holy bread	"kind of foods"	remembered (NA)	12/3/09
pRasulaq	holy bread		remembered (MH), based on Russian	12/3/09
dizzy	wigyaculnguluni / iguaculnguluni*		remembered (PP/MH,FP).*spelling of second variant cannot be confirmed at this time. May be same word as iiwaculnguluni or a close variant.	12/3/09
bobbing & weaving (going wrong way)	cangualarluni		remembered (DK)	12/3/09
haircuts, starting to get for the first time	susngarngirluni	starting to get haircuts	remembered	12/3/09
sunbathing/tanning	tungut'staarluni		remembered	12/3/09
snack	nerengcut	little foods		1/21/10

If variants are village/sub-dialectical rather than individiual speaker preference, they are identified with abbreviations for village or north/south Kodiak Island in parenthesis.

English:	Alutiiq Word:	Literal translation	Notes:	Date:
shark	arlluguaq	like an orca		1/21/10
weed eater (machine)	nauwakasqat kept'suutait	things that grow too much cutter		1/21/10
hotcake	aat'kiik		Alutiicized English. Also documented is haat'kiik.	1/21/10
hovercraft	tengauruasqaq	kind of flier		1/21/10
windshield wipers	gal'et allrursuutiit	windows' wipers		1/21/10
heated seats	nullum uqna'isuutii	butt's warmer		1/21/10
fan	aqllaruarsuuteq	thing for fake wind		2/18/10
weed killer/preventer	naut'staat yaatait	plants' poison		2/18/10
skis (dual)	anium lluuwarsuutek	snow's sliders		2/18/10
governor	Alas'kaam Angnertaa	Alaska's leader		2/18/10
studs for tires	akagngasqat llurarnisuutet*	round things' no slipping things	*the root llurar- spelling cannot be confirmed at this time.	2/18/10
pacemaker	unguwatem ikayua/ika'iwaa	heart's helper		2/18/10
artificial heart	unguwat'ruaq		this word can also be used for a heart shaped drawing	2/18/10
oxygen supply/supplimenter	anert'q'suun	thing for breath		2/18/10
cast (for broken bone)	nenrem tuumiaq'suutii	bone's holder		2/18/10
principal	skolam kasa'inaa (N) /skuulum kasa'inaa (S)	the scool's boss		2/18/10
train	cuucuuruaq/cuucuuwaq		from "choo-choo" sound	2/18/10
cartoons	callruat		remembered (MH's mother)	2/18/10
sled	saniik		remembered	2/18/10
different/not all there person	qayurngasqaq		remembered	2/18/10
crazy	kRiisuumaluni		remembered. Also documented as Kriisiumaluni	2/18/10
not all there, person is	nan'inguarluni		remembered, people say "Nan'ii" in conversation	2/18/10
silly/comical	talanghngaluni / talangraayagluni		remembered	2/18/10
sneaky/secretive	malangraayaluni*		remembered. *the spelling of this word cannot be verified at this time	2/18/10
defrosters (for windshield)	urugt'ssuutet / u'ugt'suutet	things for melting		5/26/10
bus	kaaRarpak / kaaRasinaq , pas'aq	big car (first two variants)	Paas'aq is Aluuuticized English	5/26/10
defibrillator	unguwatem arularnirt'stii (S) / unguwatem aularnirt'stii (N)	heart's starter		5/26/10

If variants are village/sub-dialectical rather than individiual speaker preference, they are identified with abbreviations for village or north/south Kodiak Island in parenthesis.

English:	Alutiiq Word:	Literal translation	Notes:	Date:
motorcycle	umtusaikalaq	loud bycicle	combined word, in addition to other word for motorcycle chosen previously	5/26/10
UFO	naken taimasqaq	thing that came from somewhere		5/26/10
UFO	llam'ek taimasqaq	thing that came from the universe		5/26/10
X-ray machine	ilugpet patRiitalisuutiit (N) / ilugpet patREtalisuutiit (S)	our innards' picture maker		5/26/10
camera	patRiitai'isuuteq (N) / patRiitalisuuteq (S)	picture maker		5/26/10
leader	Angnertaq / Angnertaa*	"big shot" / council member / leader	additional meaning approved for existing word. *second variant is same word in possessed form ("It's leader").	5/26/10
team	angayukut'sqat	people partnering together		5/26/10
makeup (plural)	cucuna'isuutet / cucunarsuutet, ineqsunarsuutet	pretty makers		5/26/10
Far out! (funny expression)	Ikanisinaq	very far	used by DK	5/26/10
spices (general)	piturnirsuutet / piturni'isuutet (N)	things for good taste		5/26/10
baking powder	pugsuuteq, stRosiruaq (N) / stRuusiruaq (S)	puff up maker, sort of yeast		5/26/10
baking soda	pugsuut'ruaq	sort of baking powder	modification of another approved word	5/26/10
men's house	qac'imaq		remembered, from CC, affirmed by others. Not sure of the difference between Qac'imaq and Qasgiq	5/26/10
Don't pay back (expression about revenge)	akiwiken'llgu, akigkunaci	don't pay back	remembered	5/26/10
snipe	kuRic'kiiq / kulic'kiiq		remembered	5/26/10
oystercatcher	kiwiksaq		remembered	5/26/10
Hang in there (funny expression)	inimakina / inimaluten	hang there	remembered	5/26/10
encouragement (expression)	Asiilliq'gkunak, asi'iciquq	Don't feel bad, it will get better	remembered	5/26/10
encouragement (expression)	Utaqasuuman	You can wait for it.	remembered	5/26/10
float plane	at'alaq		affirmed word already in use, also word for slipper	5/26/10
servant	mitkiq		remembered	6/24/10

If variants are village/sub-dialectical rather than individiual speaker preference, they are identified with abbreviations for village or north/south Kodiak Island in parenthesis.

English:	Alutiiq Word:	Literal translation	Notes:	Date:
wind chill	Aqllam quyarnart'sta / Aqllam quyarnartaa, Aqlam pat'snart'staa	the wind is making it feel cold, the wind is making it cold		6/24/10
grant	kRaan'taaq		Aluuticized English	6/24/10
grantor	minartuwista / minartuwisqaq	one who gives		6/24/10
Crab Festival	Iwalrayak Nunanirsuun (N) / Sakuuq Nunanirsuun (S)	Crab thing for making fun		6/24/10
coffee filter	Kofiam ciisuutii (N) / Kuufiam/kuugiam siita	coffee's cheese cloth		6/24/10
decaffinated coffee	kofiaruaq (N) / kuufiaruaq/kuugiaruaq (S)	fake coffee		6/24/10
phone book	niuwasuutet kalikait	phones' book/papers	uses a previously approved new word	6/24/10
office/work place	pektarwik	place to work	also documented is pekgwik	6/24/10
car wash	KaaRam urtursuutii / KaaRam urtuwisuutii*	car's washing thing	*the spelling for this word cnnot be verified at this time	6/24/10
doula	aanam ikayustii / maamam ikayustii	mother's helper		10/5/10
hamburger	augngasqaq kemek	ground meat		10/5/10
breath mint/freshener	anernerem tepk'gca'isuutii*	breath nice smell maker	*the spelling for this word cnnot be verified at this time. A possible spelling is tept'gcarsuutii.	10/5/10
job	pektaq		remembered	10/5/10
phosphorescence (in water)	riraarqaa'uq / tanqiyarqaa'uq		remembered (DK, OH, AKh, no-Kar / PP)	10/5/10
jail	palit'saaq		remembered, from English "police"	10/5/10
filter	siitaq		remembered, reuse of word for strainer fabric for home brew mash	10/5/10
reverse	kingutmiarluni / kumitngiarluni*		remembered, reuse of word for "to go backwards". *the spelling of this variant cannot be verified at this time.	10/5/10
cement/concrete	samin'taaq		remembered, from English, also okay to use for asphalt	10/5/10

Appendix B: Interview Script

Niugneliyukut (We are making words) – Research Project

Open-ended Interview Script – for participants in the NWC or the regional language advisory committee

Interviewer: First of all I would like to say *Quyanaa* (thank you) for talking to me. Before we start, I just want to make sure you are still willing to talk to me.

I just want to go over this form [informed consent form] with you again before we start. Here's a copy of it. Have I gone over this with you before? Did you have any questions for me about it? [review form with interviewee]

Is it OK if I tape record this? OK – the recorder is now going.

Interviewer: [State date and location] We are doing an interview about the New Words Council and Alutiiq language revitalization. Unless you want to have your name be confidential, can you please say your name and home community for the record?

Interviewer: I want to remind you that this interview is completely voluntary, and you can ask me to stop the recording at any time. I can also destroy the recording and my notes on this interview if you ask me to, and you can request this at any time up until my research is published.

Is it okay with you if we keep going?

Interviewer: This interviewed will be unstructured, so you can feel free to focus on what you feel is important. I would also like to remind you that you can and should avoid any topics that are uncomfortable.

The following are a list of topics that will be used to guide the interview:

- personal history/involvement with the language and revitalization

Can you tell me about how you got involved with the language program? When did you first hear about the program? When did you decide to get involved? Was there anyone in particular who got you interested in it? Any particular event that was important in getting you interested/involved?

- reasons for being involved

What were your reasons for getting involved? Was there anyone or anything in particular that got you interested? Was there something you wanted to have happen?

- opinions about language revitalization

Why are people trying to save Alutiiq? Why do YOU think we should revitalize our language? What would you say to someone who questions why we should save the language? How have opinions changed over the years about speaking Alutiiq? How does speaking Alutiiq relate to your identity as an Alutiiq person? How does the Alutiiq language relate to your home village?

- goals of the language movement

What do you think are the main goals of the Alutiiq Language movement? How are we going to reach those goals? What kinds of community projects currently involve the language? What kinds of projects are needed to save the language? What do you see as the future of our language?

- NWC [or regional language advisory committee] meetings

Who can be a member of the NWC? What are the meetings like? How does the meeting start? Who decides on the agenda? How does the group decide on a new word or make other decisions? What roles do different people play? Can you tell me about a meeting that stands out in your mind? How do people deal with any disagreements or conflicts? Are there some people who are "looked up to" more than others?

- Importance/significance of the NWC (or regional language advisory committee) in the community

How does the NWC [or regional language committee] fit in to the language movement? Why is it important? Do you feel there are benefits from the NWC beyond just the words they create? What are they? Do non-Natives know about what we are doing? How does the larger community feel about the NWC? How could the NWC be better?

- Other

Is there anything you would like to add? Is there anything I did not ask about that you think is important? Do you have any questions for me?

Quyanaa – Thank You, for agreeing to this interview. Would you like a copy of the transcript of this interview when it is typed up?

Appendix C: Talking Circle Questions

Questions for Talking Circle – August 11th, 2009

Niugneliyukut – *We are Making New Words*: A Community Philosophy of Language Revitalization. Doctoral research by April G.L. Counceller

April will explain research project.

Any questions about my research? Has everyone signed a release?

What has our language revitalization movement meant to you personally?

Why should we care if our language goes away?

If you are a learner, do you think you will ever be fluent? Is there more to being involved than becoming fully fluent?

What is needed at this stage to go to the next level in our language revitalization?

Do you think our language revitalization is more about healing or justice, or both? Why?

What kinds of roles do learners and academic experts play in relation to the Elders on the council?

Who do you think gets more out of it, the Elders or the learners? Why?

What kind of message does having a NWC send to the world? To other tribes?

Who do you think will use the words that we make on the New Words Council?

What should we do to make the New Words Council better?

Appendix D: Institutional Review Board Exemption

UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

(907) 474-7800
(907) 474-5444 fax
fyirb@uaf.edu
www.uaf.edu/irb

Institutional Review Board
909 N Koyukuk Dr. Suite 212, P.O. Box 757270, Fairbanks, Alaska 99775-7270

February 29, 2008

To: Patrick Marlow, Ph.D
Principal Investigator

From: Bridget Stockdale, Research Integrity Administrator
Office of Research Integrity

Re: IRB Protocol Application

Thank you for submitting the IRB protocol application identified below. I have administratively reviewed this protocol and determined that it meets the requirements specified in the federal regulations regarding human subjects' protections for exempt research under 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) for research involving the use of educational tests, survey procedures of observation of public behavior and 45 CFR 46.101(b)(4) for research involving the collection or study of publicly available existing data documents, records, pathological specimens or diagnostic specimens.

Protocol #: 08-07

Title: *Niugneliyukut: An Investigation of Cultural Meaning in Indigenous New Words Creation*

Level: Exempt

Received: February 12, 2008

Review Date: February 29, 2008

If there are major changes to the scope of research or personnel involved on the project, please contact the Office of Research Integrity. Email us at fyirb@uaf.edu of call 474-7800. Contact the Office of Research Integrity if you have any questions regarding IRB policies or procedures.

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